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THE RED BOOK

MAGAZINE

EDITED BY KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN

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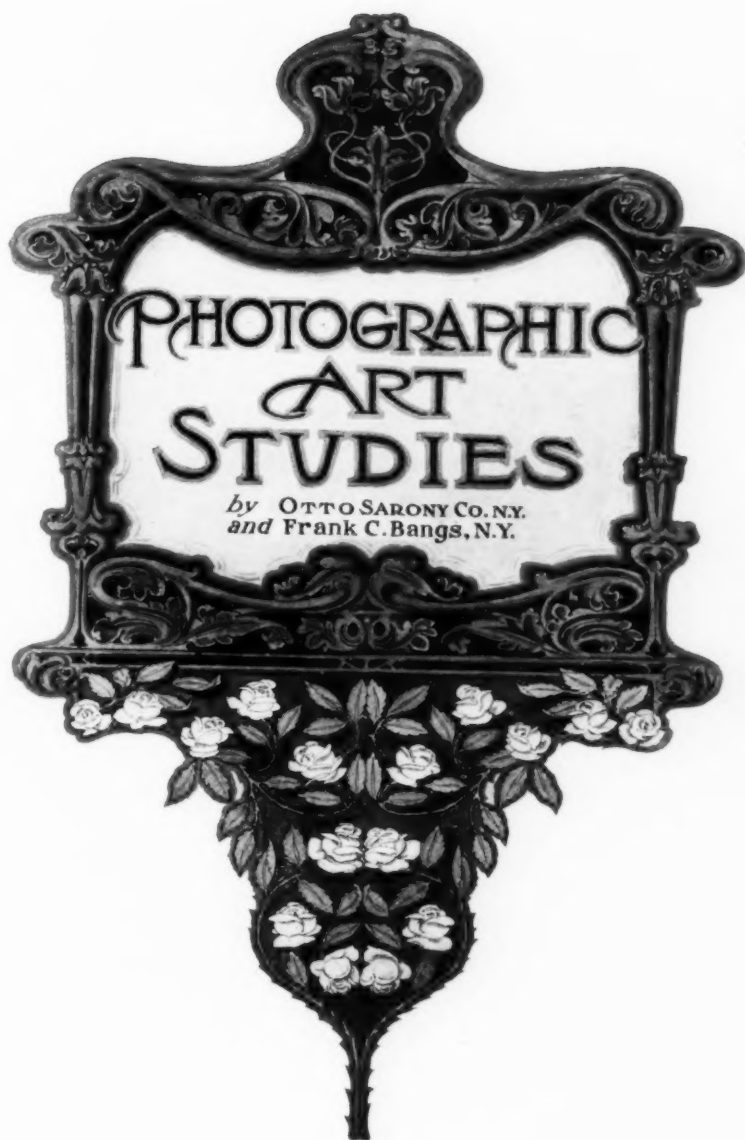
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in Vaudeville



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Starring in "The Fair Co-Ed."



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Leading lady in "A Certain Lady"



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in "Is Matrimony a Failure?"



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in "The Jolly Bachelors"



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Playing the leading role in "The City"



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in "The Midnight Sons"



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MISS FANNIE ALLISON
in Vaudeville



Here they were to live and love

To accompany "The Clutch of Circumstance"—page 737



THE RED BOOK

MAGAZINE

Vol. XIV.

March, 1910

No. 5

The Clutch of Circum- stance

BY EMERY POTTLE

ILLUSTRATED BY WALTER DEAN GOLDBECK

(See frontispiece)

I

SHE sat alone in the large gracious room which she called the studio, her chair drawn up to a heavy carved Italian table. Her arms, stretched out, rested on the ancient dark surface, and her hands clasped, half-supplicatingly, half-desperately, a little locked gray box of olive wood. The delicacy of the outline of her face, the sweetness of its curves—which once was, in the flush of youth, the fair foundation of a serene girlish beauty—were marred by the ravages of disquieted nerves far more than by the passing of the years. There quivered in her eyes, which were still fine and of a depth of azure, a restlessness, a dissatisfaction, and, at the moment, a naked pain, instead of the tranquility that would so well have accorded with them.

Mrs. Wrexham once bluntly said of her, "I don't know why on earth it should be so, but Caroline always appears to me as if something was *gnawing* her inside." The more casual observer would have noted her as a worn, tired woman of some forty years, slight, charmingly dressed, distinguished. To-day, as she stared fixedly at the little gray box, all the longing, the sorry pathos, the regret for lost opportunities, which the hour of unguarded reminiscence renders so cruelly on the face of the middle-aged woman, lay open to view as Caroline Laidlaw sat alone before the altar of her dead gods.



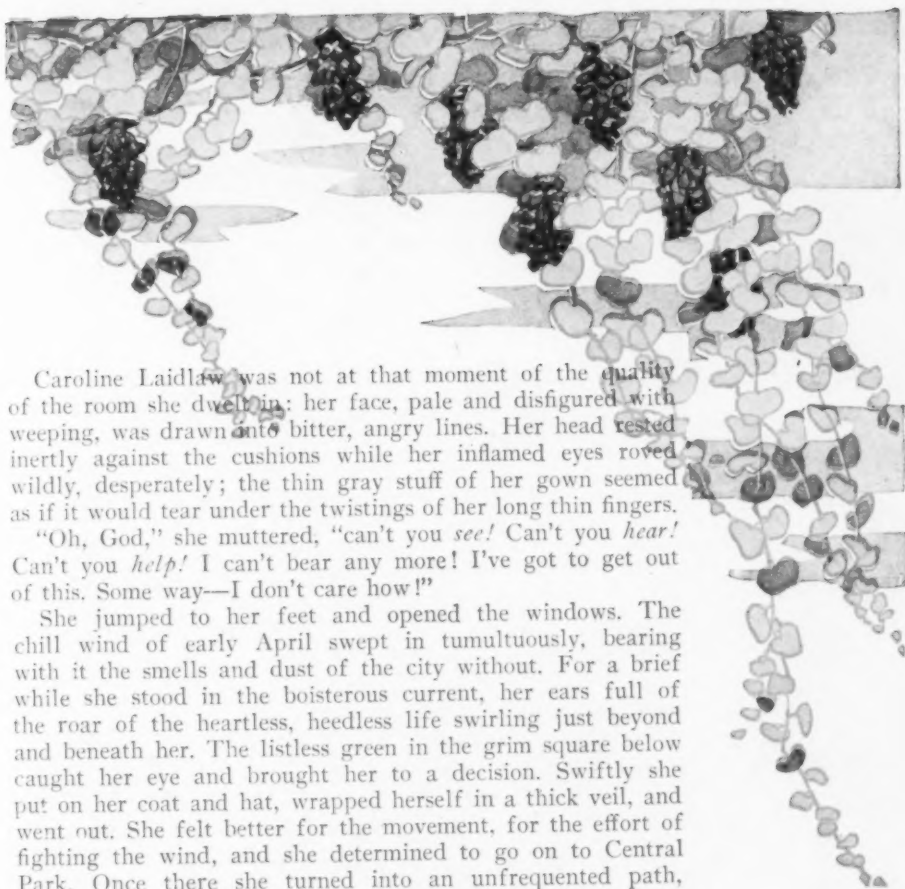
Presently, with a sigh, a half-protest against her weakness, she opened the box. There was in it nothing except the crackling faded remnants of what had once been a handful of yellow primroses. They were too fragile to lift; under the touch of her lightest finger they began to crumble into dust. At this symbol of the eternal frailty of romance her eyes filled with tears. She let them gather and fall unheeded. The little break in the dyke widened. It had been so long since she had yielded—she was not a woman of many tears—that now the first barrier was down she gave up all defense and submitted, with a dreary satisfaction, to the in-rushing tides. Her head bent forward till her brow rested on the olive-wood box, the while she sobbed wildly, almost without knowledge of why she was sobbing.

Hers was not a room to suggest itself as a housing for despair. Beside being of handsome proportions, of subdued restful decorations, there was in its furnishing a pleasant mixture of heterogeneous bits, with no logical order or fidelity to period—things picked up in foreign countries for the most part—which invested the place with an intimacy, gave one a sense of its inhabitant. The long late shimmering sun-rays fell with satisfied fingers along the amber and gold and green of the damasks and silks hanging on the railing of the mezzanine gallery, touched ecstatically the gorgeous Chinese embroidery that covered the top of the grand piano in the center of the room. The mourner raised her head dazedly, as one emerges from a wretched dream, and the shock of finding herself still in the old, unchanged surroundings disheartened her afresh. She looked fretfully at her watch. It recorded five. She shook her head.

"It's too late now. I can't get there. And if I could, I'd be a horrid sight. It doesn't matter. I'm glad."

Dully she got up from her chair and shut the little box. Then she locked it away in a Spanish chest; that done she went into another room, bathed her face, re-arranged her hair, and came back again to the studio, where she dropped limply into a *chaise-longue*.

"I'm too old for that sort of thing," she sighed. "I don't know why I did it. It kills me physically and mentally and spiritually. It must have been the coming Spring which made me open that box. Ah, what a fool I am to add *that* to the load of things I'm carrying."



Caroline Laidlaw was not at that moment of the quality of the room she dwelt in; her face, pale and disfigured with weeping, was drawn into bitter, angry lines. Her head rested inertly against the cushions while her inflamed eyes roved wildly, desperately; the thin gray stuff of her gown seemed as if it would tear under the twistings of her long thin fingers.

"Oh, God," she muttered, "can't you *see*? Can't you *hear*? Can't you *help*? I can't bear any more! I've got to get out of this. Some way—I don't care how!"

She jumped to her feet and opened the windows. The chill wind of early April swept in tumultuously, bearing with it the smells and dust of the city without. For a brief while she stood in the boisterous current, her ears full of the roar of the heartless, heedless life swirling just beyond and beneath her. The listless green in the grim square below caught her eye and brought her to a decision. Swiftly she put on her coat and hat, wrapped herself in a thick veil, and went out. She felt better for the movement, for the effort of fighting the wind, and she determined to go on to Central Park. Once there she turned into an unfrequented path, slackened her pace, and gave herself over utterly to the thoughts which beat at the bars of her brain like frantic caged birds.

II

The web of events in her life had in it not many more tragic threads than one is likely to find in the warp and woof of most lives—if one judges from the standpoint of the Just Weaver. Indeed, it appeared that for the harm done her there had been granted a rather equitable compensation. It was generally said of her that Caroline Laidlaw was a very lucky girl, a lucky woman. But, after all, it is as difficult a task to estimate good fortune as ill, and no one, very likely not even the recipient of it, knows the truth of the matter, so inscrutable are the ends of the Unseen Givers.

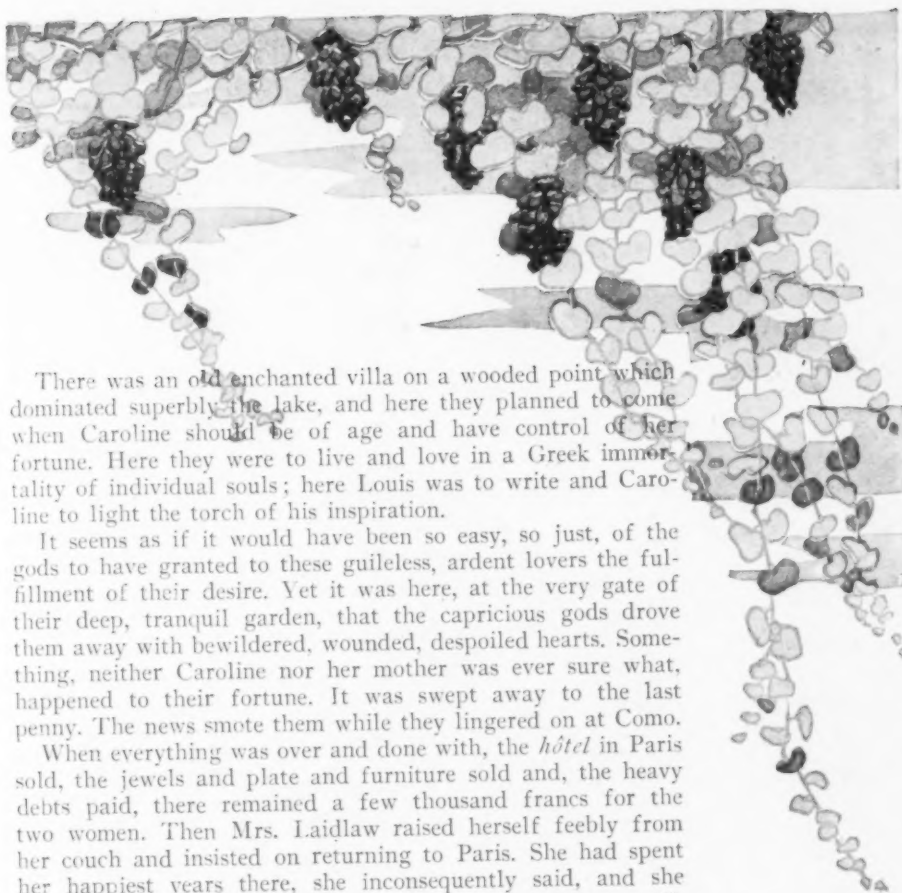
Her father, a silent, upright, dignified man, with a relentless capacity for money-making, died when she was thirteen, leaving her, the only child, to the care of her frail, tender-hearted, querulous, rather insipid mother. They went abroad, where the little Caroline was installed in an excellent convent outside Paris, and where Mrs. Laidlaw divided the time be-



tween her too gorgeous *hôtel* in the Faubourg St. Germain and a variety of Continental cures, neither of which gave her much satisfaction. At nineteen Caroline made her adieux to the convent and her pretty, modest bow to French society. She was a sweet, good-tempered, impulsive child, with charming manners and an excellent Parisian accent; beside that, she spoke Italian and German and seemed to have a more than ordinary talent for music. Since she was known to be the heiress to an unusually large fortune, this, combined with her agreeable natural gifts, made her, in French eyes, a most acceptable, adorable young creature. She blossomed, then, so delightfully into the society of the French capital that her mother, with good reason, was beguiled into radiant visions of Caroline's ultimate *épanouissement* as a *duchesse* in a rehabilitated château, with a family tree like a banyan.

It is quite likely that this would have happened, for the girl was, as a rule, an amenable soul and fond of France, had they not, she and her mother, made one spring an excursion to Venice. Here she met Louis Starr, and having met him, fell in love with him—as many other women, old and young, were doing. The situation was further complicated by Starr's falling in love with Caroline. He was a vivid, handsome, impassioned, impecunious youth of five-and-twenty, born of expatriated American parents in Italy, and he believed himself a poet. Enveloped in the perilous romance of Venice, the two virginal creatures kindled their immortal passion, which burned with so white and consuming a flame that even indolent Mrs. Laidlaw roused in alarm and departed from the city with all speed.

In the desolate year that followed, the lovers, though separated, kept up a frenzied, clandestine correspondence, in which they languished and pined and suffered and triumphantly hoped. The following April the Laidlaws came to the Lake of Como and there Louis Starr followed them. Poor Caroline, bruised and buffeted by incessant combats with her outraged mother, still clung with the persistency of love to her poet, having refused two dukes and a noble prince. With Louis, who lodged in a tiny pension safely out of sight of the Laidlaws' hotel, she would escape and wander the new-green hills, where the footprints of spring lay lightly on the tender fields and the fine frail music of her pipes sounded divinely in their attuned hearts.



There was an old enchanted villa on a wooded point which dominated superbly the lake, and here they planned to come when Caroline should be of age and have control of her fortune. Here they were to live and love in a Greek immortality of individual souls; here Louis was to write and Caroline to light the torch of his inspiration.

It seems as if it would have been so easy, so just, of the gods to have granted to these guileless, ardent lovers the fulfillment of their desire. Yet it was here, at the very gate of their deep, tranquil garden, that the capricious gods drove them away with bewildered, wounded, despoiled hearts. Something, neither Caroline nor her mother was ever sure what, happened to their fortune. It was swept away to the last penny. The news smote them while they lingered on at Como.

When everything was over and done with, the *hôtel* in Paris sold, the jewels and plate and furniture sold and, the heavy debts paid, there remained a few thousand francs for the two women. Then Mrs. Laidlaw raised herself feebly from her couch and insisted on returning to Paris. She had spent her happiest years there, she inconsequently said, and she wished to die there, in what dire poverty she cared not at all.

So Caroline walked in the spring hills above Tremezzo for the last time with Louis Starr. They were too dismayed and beaten down to realize anything except their imminent parting. They wept and vowed and protested passionately; then she stumbled blindly back to her hotel alone with a bleeding heart and a handful of yellow primroses which Louis had given her. All she realized was that life is a horrid giant in the blossoming path, with a bludgeon in his hand, and that she and Louis were to be faithful to each other forever.

Two sordid years followed for Caroline Laidlaw, in which she lodged with her ill mother in a wretched little Paris pension. Their money dwindled alarmingly, they saw almost nothing of their old friends, and Louis Starr's letters grew more and more infrequent.

At last one day Mrs. Laidlaw mercifully died. It happened at a time when Mrs. Wrexham was in Paris. She was a girlhood friend of poor Mary Laidlaw, and out of the goodness of her heart she generously made the arrangements for the funeral and the sorry burial in *Père La Chaise*. After which, she mothered this haggard, hopeless girl in cheap black clothes, and ended by taking her back to New York.



The last vicious blow fell on Caroline's defenseless head the very week of her mother's death. And it was, in a sense, as good a time as any time to strike, for she was in such a state of dumb, indifferent suffering that any additional anguish did not seem greatly to matter. She had a wild, incoherent, distorted letter from Louis which, when one arrived at the gist of it, conveyed the news of his impending marriage to an Italian woman with a fortune—a marriage into which he was forced, he miserably confessed, by his bitter need of money.

Caroline impassively, leadenly burned the letter and packed her trunk for America, with the dull hope that the ship would be lost in its crossing. But from that day began, so the people who knew her said, her good luck. Mrs. Wrexham and her friends, many of whom were old friends of the Laidlaws, came charitably to the support of the forlorn girl, and presently she was established as a music-teacher to the little children of the rich. So the years began to run on; and she patiently played the piano, accepted the crumbs from the rich man's table, and through it all, despite certain opportunities for change, remained single.

Yet gradually, almost imperceptibly, as she assisted reluctant little hands to run the torturing scales, as she sweetly accepted the offerings of her patrons, there generated in Caroline Laidlaw a slow spirit of rebellion. In its beginnings she regarded it fearfully—or rather she refused to regard it. She accused herself of gross unthankfulness and underwent, as it were, penances of gratitude. Later, against her will, she found herself cherishing this wayward spirit, and still later she opened to it recklessly her heart and her mind. As she had defied her mother and clung obstinately to Louis Starr, so now she defied her so-called good-luck. It was this spark of rebellion, so long smouldering in her breast, that had, on the day when she sobbed over Starr's wasted primroses, flashed up into open war.

III

The Park gave her the sense of an empty, desolate house, clean-swept, awaiting the arrival of its spring tenants, and this sense accorded well enough with her own mood. She walked rapidly, aimlessly, on and on, avoiding, as far as



They had amused the little Elena



possible, the few intruders on her solitariness, and giving scant heed to the pale, characterless approach of the April twilight. Her mind was rioting; the hue and cry of revolt clashed within her.

"If they only knew the misery of it!" she muttered. "The loss of self-respect!"

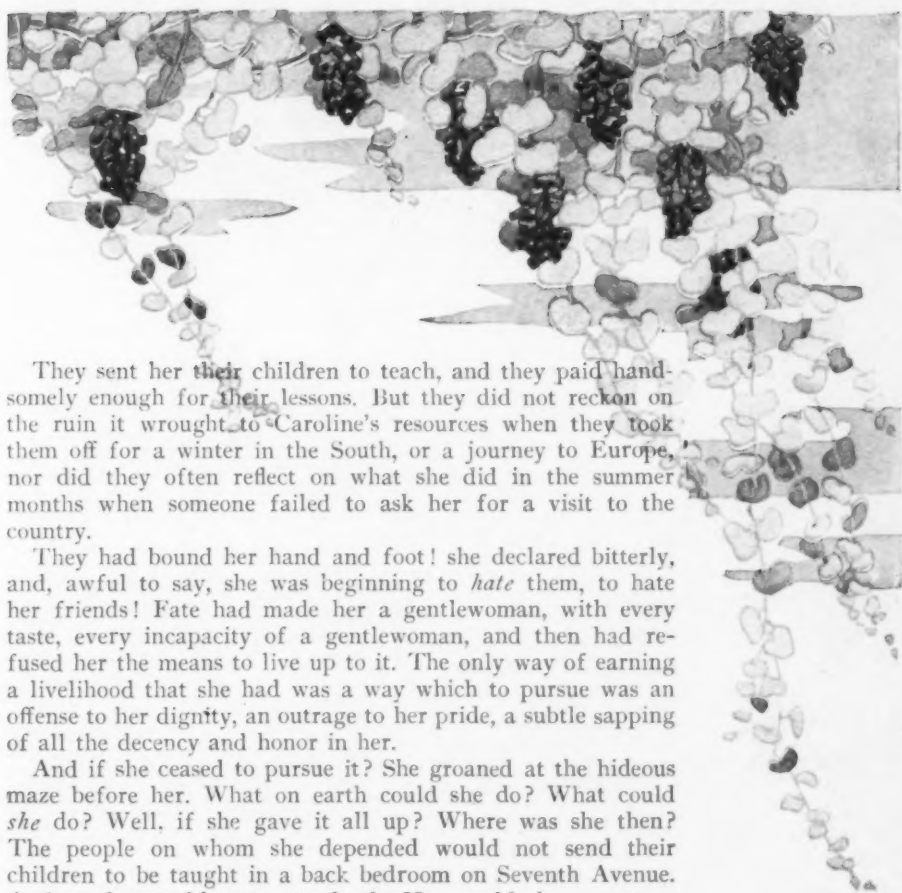
Well, that was it, she told herself ruthlessly; she had lost her self-respect. She had taken and taken and taken, paying helplessly in the coinage of gratitude; and when that coinage had begun to run short, she had resorted to counterfeiting, giving in return larger denominations with the ideas of concealing her fault. After all, she was not to blame. She was a victim. Her destiny had made her incapable and then had jeered at her for her incapacity. There had been no one to tell her the mistake she was making, to advise her. The thing had grown hiddenly, without her perception.

In the beginning it had seemed so wonderful, miraculous even, her good luck. She recalled that first year when Mrs. Wrexham had installed her in the studio. It had been furnished by charity and the year's rent had been paid by charity—but so kind a charity. Her friends had really vied with each other in "making Caroline comfortable." And she had entered upon the new life happily, with a happiness to be sure, always modulated to minor thirds by her sorrow, her broken heart. In the shelter of her pretty rooms she had believed that she was at the threshold of peace, such peace at least, as she could now hope for.

And what a disillusion!

How she had struggled and fought for her living! There was not a soul who knew of the wretchedness of it all. The very charity of her friends had tied her tongue. She went mute and suffering.

How could they guess of her dire need of money! They saw her in their cast-off finery, always suave, smiling, and they drank her tea in the rooms they had furnished. But they did not know how often she was at her wits' end to pay for that tea, nor of her sleepless nights of fear over a thousand ghastly bills. They did not guess the privations she endured to raise the rent for her apartment, the many days when she made a meal on a dry roll, a biscuit or two, because she had not enough in her purse to spare for food in the restaurant below.



They sent her ~~their~~ children to teach, and they paid handsomely enough for ~~their~~ lessons. But they did not reckon on the ruin it wrought to Caroline's resources when they took them off for a winter in the South, or a journey to Europe, nor did they often reflect on what she did in the summer months when someone failed to ask her for a visit to the country.

They had bound her hand and foot! she declared bitterly, and, awful to say, she was beginning to *hate* them, to hate her friends! Fate had made her a gentlewoman, with every taste, every incapacity of a gentlewoman, and then had refused her the means to live up to it. The only way of earning a livelihood that she had was a way which to pursue was an offense to her dignity, an outrage to her pride, a subtle sapping of all the decency and honor in her.

And if she ceased to pursue it? She groaned at the hideous maze before her. What on earth could she do? What could *she* do? Well, if she gave it all up? Where was she then? The people on whom she depended would not send their children to be taught in a back bedroom on Seventh Avenue. And so she would starve to death. Nor could she prepare a sort of manifesto to be issued broadcast, to the effect that Caroline Laidlaw politely informed her friends that she would refuse any further kindness on their part.

It was not poverty which frightened her, she assured herself eagerly—poverty that was honest; independent poverty. It was charity. If at this very moment someone came to her to say that she was henceforth to live on the meagerest sum, but a sum which she should honorably earn by her own efforts; that she was to dwell among workers in a straitened worker's way, how joyfully she would accept. She ran over in her mind the courses open to her. Flight—where and how? Impossible. A change of occupation—a change to what? She could not typewrite, nor nurse the sick, nor write books or plays, nor become an actress; she could not make candy or jig-saw puzzles; she could not cook, nor go out to service, she could not—

Ah, the futility of enumeration! There was nothing she could do which would free her from that damned charity. Marriage—but there was no one now who wanted to marry her; in any case, a marriage for money would only plunge her more deeply in the hateful mire of dependence. Then



there was death. She had often of late prayed to die, yet she lacked the courage to kill herself—lacked, not from religious scruples but from the instinctive physical fear of some kind of after-punishment for the deed. Oh, God, was there no help? Had she to go on and on and on in the way in which life had set her? Her head swam with the madresses in her brain; she dug her fingers into her palms to keep from shrieking.

And Louis? The thought sprang vividly into her mind. How had he fared in his marriage for money? She had never heard nor tried to hear. With a sudden vindictiveness she hoped that his chains had galled him to the raw, that he had suffered even as she had suffered, and worse, for his fault had been deliberate. The idea gave her a brief savage ecstasy.

She lifted her head and gazed angrily about her. A sheen like thin gold over silver was in the west, the wind was dying with the day, the immemorial quietness of coming night stilled even the great city park.

As she gazed, her unavailing fury abated in the involuntary twilight appeal. A sick sadness welled in her.

"No, no," she whispered, "I hope it has been well with Louis. What has come to us, has come. No one can change it a hair's breadth. The gods of youth die young and the old gods are blind."

She stood a moment, uncertain whether to proceed or to turn back. She decided to go on a little farther and leave by an upper gate, but she had not taken twenty steps before she came face to face with a man hand-in-hand with a little girl. As she raised her eyes to him in passing, every nerve in her body jumped hot, and her blood, on the instant, seemed to stop, to surge through her.

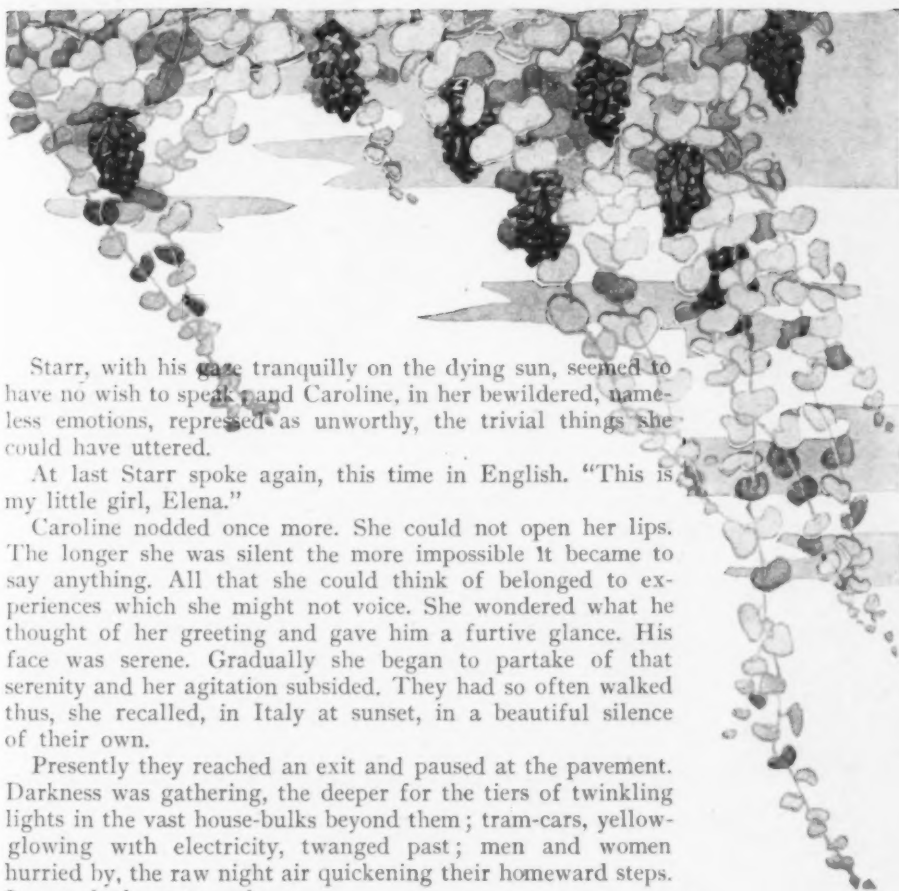
Her voice issued without her volition.

"Louis!"

The man halted and eyed her steadily, striving to penetrate the veil over her face.

"Is it thou, Lina?" he said in Italian, his voice grave and gentle.

She nodded silently, for she could not control her words. He had spoken in the language in their love-making, he had called her *thou* and *Lina*. Scarcely knowing what they did, the three walked on in strange silence, the great brown eyes of the little girl fastened curiously on the other two.



Starr, with his gaze tranquilly on the dying sun, seemed to have no wish to speak, and Caroline, in her bewildered, nameless emotions, repressed as unworthy, the trivial things she could have uttered.

At last Starr spoke again, this time in English. "This is my little girl, Elena."

Caroline nodded once more. She could not open her lips. The longer she was silent the more impossible it became to say anything. All that she could think of belonged to experiences which she might not voice. She wondered what he thought of her greeting and gave him a furtive glance. His face was serene. Gradually she began to partake of that serenity and her agitation subsided. They had so often walked thus, she recalled, in Italy at sunset, in a beautiful silence of their own.

Presently they reached an exit and paused at the pavement. Darkness was gathering, the deeper for the tiers of twinkling lights in the vast house-bulks beyond them; tram-cars, yellow-glowing with electricity, twanged past; men and women hurried by, the raw night air quickening their homeward steps. It was the hour to go home.

"Will you and Elena come home with me to dine?" Caroline asked. She added in a low voice. "I am alone."

Starr smiled.

"Yes, gladly. We, too, are alone here. I seemed to know I should find you to-day."

IV

When they had gone, she piled fresh wood on the open fire, turned out the electricity, and lighted an array of candles. She got into her dressing-gown and pulled the *chaise-longue* close up to the blaze, where she huddled, glad for the warmth. The expense of the wood and lights she disregarded.

It had been a reckless evening for her. She had sent out for bunches of violets and daffodils—Louis' flowers—and she had ordered the subtlest, the most delicate dinner the *chef* in the house restaurant could accomplish, with the garnish of champagne, for she remembered Louis' young whimsicalities about "a party not being a party without champagne." Yet she had, as she did it all, a vague unreasonable sense of something not quite in good taste. To pay for that dinner



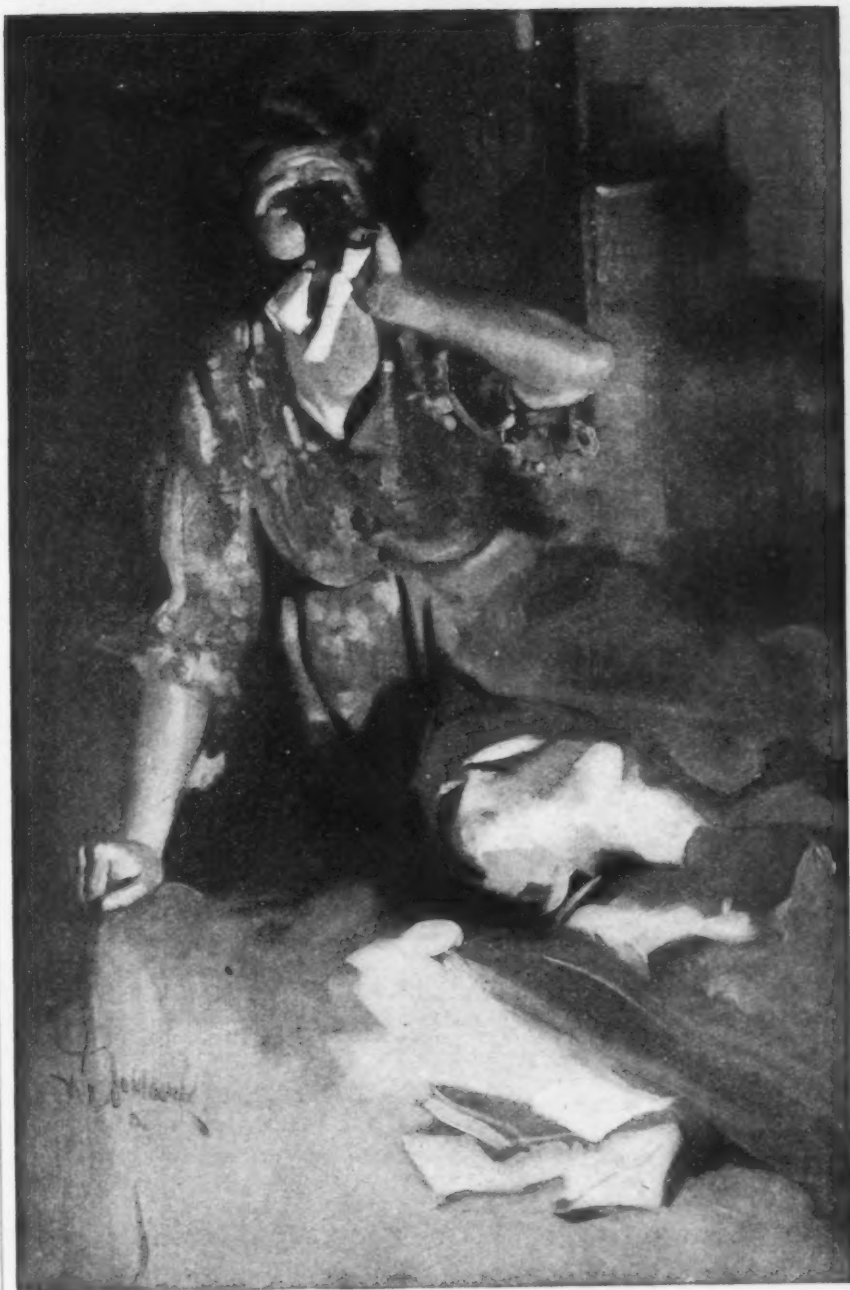
meant the most blighting economies, endless meals at a Child's eating place; but to-night she put all this aside for the greater consideration.

He had sat there in that chair, smoking his endless cigarets, Louis. Her eyes still held him—thin, pale, slightly stooped, shabbily-clad in foreign black clothes that seemed the remains of his former mourning. He was handsome still in his fine regularity of feature, though its appeal was no more than that of an old faded portrait; and yet when he smiled his youth danced like a ghost over his face. But the flame of his spirit was clean gone and the ashes of suffering were on his head. Looking at him he gave her such a feeling as she had when she first saw Shelly's grave in Rome. Louis, too, had suffered a sea-change into something strange, even rich perhaps. It was a new Louis. She could not believe that in him had once dwelt the Louis she had loved. Every prop was knocked from under her and she had dangled helplessly in his presence.

She went over slowly in her mind all that he had said of himself—it was easy to recall, for there was so little of it. This little he had let fall scatteringly during the evening, in his hesitating speech interlarded with Italian words; he said he had spoken almost no English for twenty years. But of him, the inner him of these bygone years, she knew nothing. She realized that he must know as little of her. What an absurd encounter! They had scarcely talked at all together. Instead, they had amused the sweet and solemn little Elena, using French and Italian which were the only tongues she knew.

There had been a sense of content and quiet pleasure in the evening which gratefully lingered with her. It occurred to her startlingly that it was such an evening as she might have passed with Louis if she had been *his wife* for these past twenty years. His wife! And he, what did he think of *her*? He had given her no clue. Was she old and ugly and fretful in his eyes? Just an agreeable memory? A friend of chance meeting? An echo? The embers of an offering on the altars of youth? She shivered and drew closer to the fire. What was she? What was she?

He had promised to come again, to-morrow. Why? The bewilderment of it! She had forgiven him all his unfaithfulness to her. Why?



She began to kiss the scattered sheets



To whom, to what, in all these years had she been faithful? What had she loved? She had no answer. She wanted to cry, but she could not give herself a reason for tears. She stared into the fire until the flames died out and nothing was left save ashes and charred bits; until the candles guttered dismally in their sockets. Then she crept off to bed and sobbed there for hours in cold, convulsive nervousness because she was more lonely than she had ever been in her lonely life.

The next day was a day of endless, icy rain. Caroline Laidlaw, cowering about her rooms, was in the abasement of every physical and spiritual force. The morning post brought her a mocking array of bills and a letter from Mrs. Wrexham, inviting her, for July and August, to Bar Harbor. The idea of acceptance nauseated her. She foresaw the dreadful hours with her imperious benefactress, the obligatory smirking gratitudes, every carefully thought out speech and act, the miserable daily periods of "Double Dummy"—she hated cards and played accordingly; and all this in the fattest luxury. She did not dress, nor eat, nor light a fire until tea-time, when she expected Louis. But tea-time passed and night came leaving her still alone.

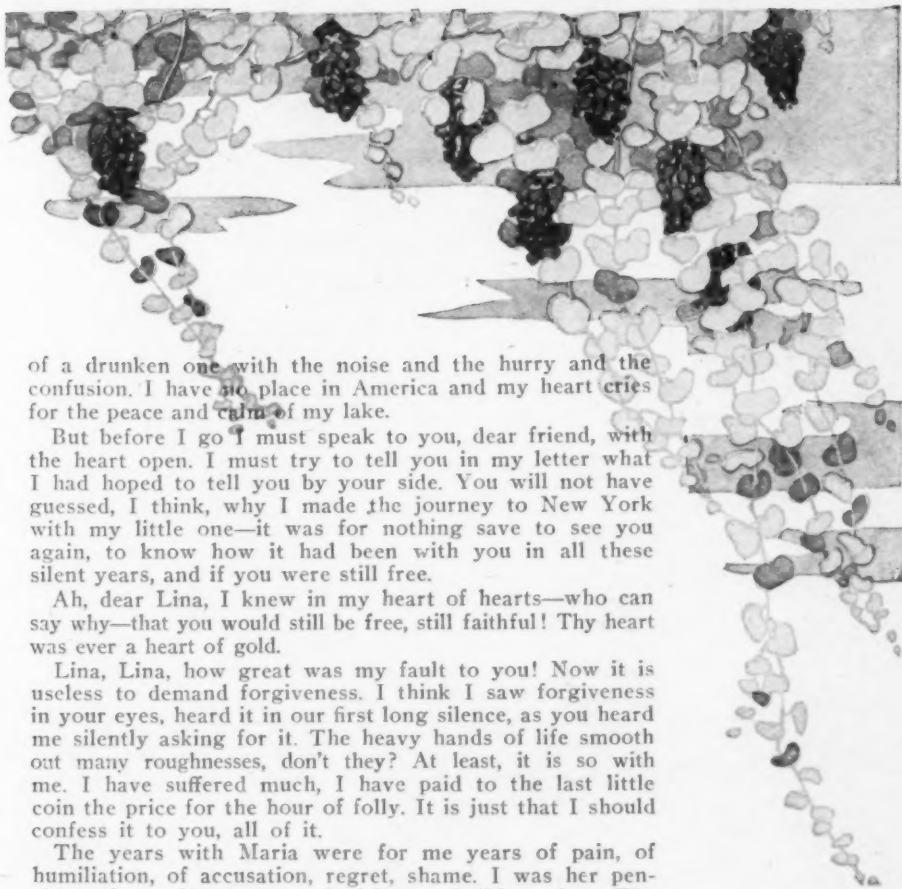
"You might have known," she sneered. "You fool! What is it to him? To anybody? I'm nothing but one of his hundred worn-out, old, faded, pathetic sweethearts! Something to pity—and to leave. It's useless to fight against things. I give up, I give up. I'll take it all."

She took a quantity of aspirine, put on the most elaborate of her charity evening-gowns, and dined at the house of the woman who had given it to her, and who had invited her at the last moment to fill a vacant chair. She was so gay and sympathetic and diverting to the old French *savant* who took her in that he summed her up for an heiress and meditated on the possibilities of marrying her, until he heard later her story from his thoughtful hostess.

Morning brought Caroline a letter half in Italian, half in English, from Louis Starr:

LINA

I did not come to you yesterday because it seemed better, much better, that I should go away without seeing you again. So when you are reading this the little Lina and I will be on the ship which will take us back to our Italy. I am very weary for my *paese* and my head is the head



of a drunken one with the noise and the hurry and the confusion, I have no place in America and my heart cries for the peace and calm of my lake.

But before I go I must speak to you, dear friend, with the heart open. I must try to tell you in my letter what I had hoped to tell you by your side. You will not have guessed, I think, why I made the journey to New York with my little one—it was for nothing save to see you again, to know how it had been with you in all these silent years, and if you were still free.

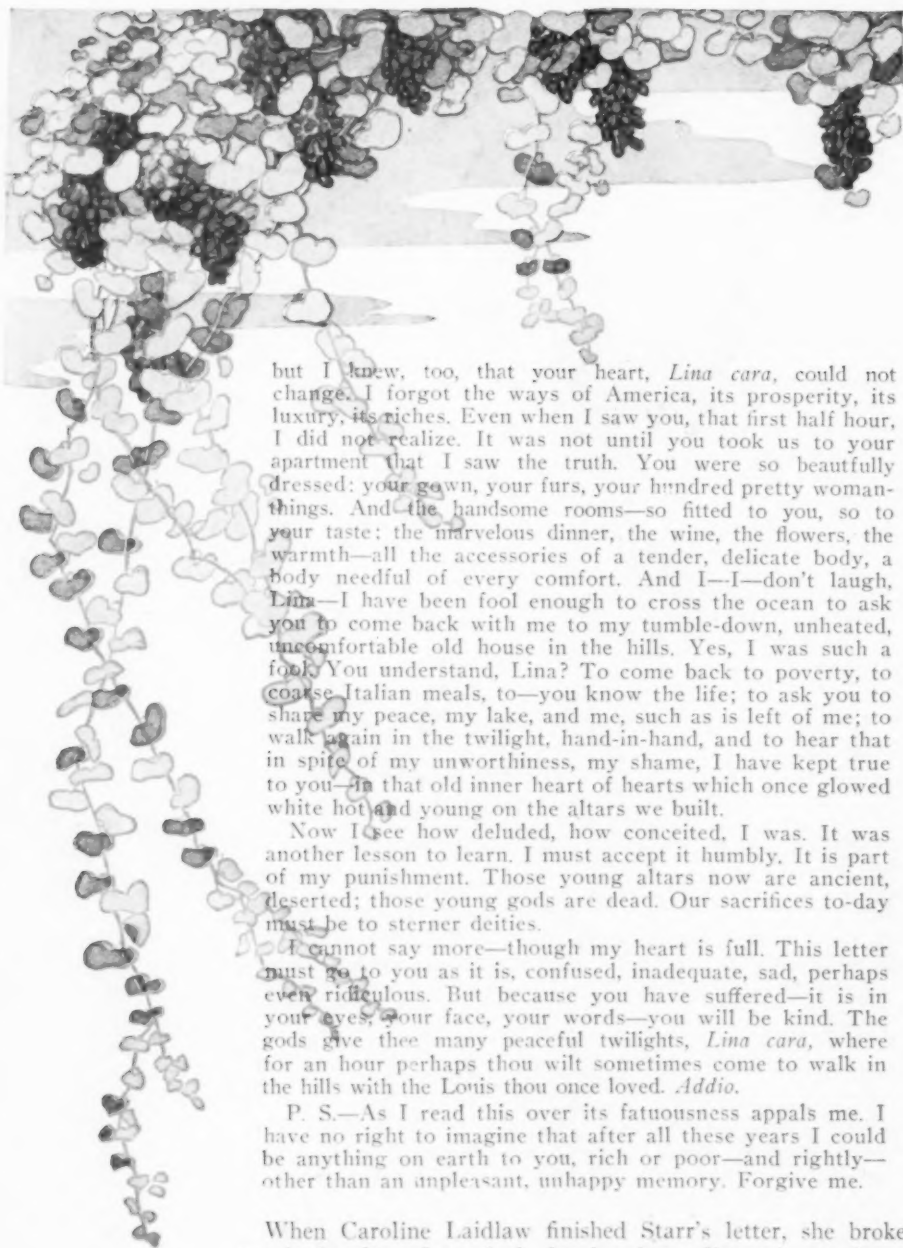
Ah, dear Lina, I knew in my heart of hearts—who can say why—that you would still be free, still faithful! Thy heart was ever a heart of gold.

Lina, Lina, how great was my fault to you! Now it is useless to demand forgiveness. I think I saw forgiveness in your eyes, heard it in our first long silence, as you heard me silently asking for it. The heavy hands of life smooth out many roughnesses, don't they? At least, it is so with me. I have suffered much, I have paid to the last little coin the price for the hour of folly. It is just that I should confess it to you, all of it.

The years with Maria were for me years of pain, of humiliation, of accusation, regret, shame. I was her pensioner, her paid attendant. God knows I did my best. The Louis that you knew died, slowly, wretchedly to be sure, but he died. And the years dragged on.

I will not speak more of that side of it. Then Maria went. You will understand when I tell you that her death was a deep relief. She left me her fortune and the big villa at Cadenabbia. That was two years ago. Since then I have never touched a *centesimo* of that money, nor shall I ever. The villa is let for ten years. The income is set aside for Elena's dowry—which is right, for Maria was her mother. When my parents died they left me a tiny legacy of six hundred dollars a year and on that we live, Elena and I, in an old, broken-down cottage, in the hills above Tremezzo, there where you and I walked together and gathered the spring primroses. We are little better than the peasants; we make the direst economies. But out of it, in these two years, alone with my blessed little girl, has come such a peace as I never dreamed of. There has been only one thing lacking—*thou*. How often at twilight in the spring I have seen you, still a girl, walking among the fields, your hands filled with flowers, until I almost called aloud to you to come home.

By one way and another I saved the money for our passage, second-class, on the steamer, and—I came to find you. I knew you would have changed, I think, outwardly,



but I knew, too, that your heart, *Lina cara*, could not change. I forgot the ways of America, its prosperity, its luxury, its riches. Even when I saw you, that first half hour, I did not realize. It was not until you took us to your apartment that I saw the truth. You were so beautifully dressed: your gown, your furs, your hundred pretty woman-things. And the handsome rooms—so fitted to you, so to your taste: the marvelous dinner, the wine, the flowers, the warmth—all the accessories of a tender, delicate body, a body needful of every comfort. And I—I—don't laugh, *Lina*—I have been fool enough to cross the ocean to ask you to come back with me to my tumble-down, unheated, uncomfortable old house in the hills. Yes, I was such a fool. You understand, *Lina*? To come back to poverty, to coarse Italian meals, to—you know the life; to ask you to share my peace, my lake, and me, such as is left of me; to walk again in the twilight, hand-in-hand, and to hear that in spite of my unworthiness, my shame, I have kept true to you—in that old inner heart of hearts which once glowed white hot and young on the altars we built.

Now I see how deluded, how conceited, I was. It was another lesson to learn. I must accept it humbly. It is part of my punishment. Those young altars now are ancient, deserted; those young gods are dead. Our sacrifices to-day must be to sterner deities.

I cannot say more—though my heart is full. This letter must go to you as it is, confused, inadequate, sad, perhaps even ridiculous. But because you have suffered—it is in your eyes, your face, your words—you will be kind. The gods give thee many peaceful twilights, *Lina cara*, where for an hour perhaps thou wilt sometimes come to walk in the hills with the Louis thou once loved. *Addio*.

P. S.—As I read this over its fatuousness appals me. I have no right to imagine that after all these years I could be anything on earth to you, rich or poor—and rightly—other than an unpleasant, unhappy memory. Forgive me.

When Caroline Laidlaw finished Starr's letter, she broke out in laughter, hysterical, dry laughter, distressing to hear. Then with a sudden, gusty passion she dropped to her knees and began to kiss the scattered sheets.

"Free—free—free," she murmured, "free at last."

Her tears fell thick and staining on the paper, fell on her parched heart like healing rain.

"Louis, Louis, I am coming to you, to the little house in the hills, to the twilights, to the lake, to peace!"



The Widow Meighan's Cassimeer Shawl

BY SEUMAS MACMANUS

ILLUSTRATED BY FREDERICK RICHARDSON

FATHER PAT, when he was admirin' it, called it, I b'lieve, a Cashmere shawl; but as Widow Meighan owned it, she had the best right to know; and she called it a 'Cassimeer.'

There isn't any mistake about it, it was a delight of a shawl; and every woman from the top of the parish to the foot of it consented as much when they rolled their eyes and wished to Heaven that Providence had sent them such another.

But it wasn't Providence who sent it to Mrs. Meighan at all, at all. It was Partholan McCue who fetched it home from America to her, a present from her daughter Annie in Philadelphia; for poor Annie, God bliss her, never forgot little kindnesses to the mother who reared her. Many's the pound note, and many's the two pound and three pound, and sometimes even five pound, she sent home to

the mother out of her little earnin's from the stranger.

And whenever a neighbor boy or girl came home again from Philadelphia just for a look at the oul' country to see was it there still or how was it gettin' on, little Annie never missed but she sent some kind of a wee remembrance to her poor mother. This time it was a Cassimeer shawl, the most lovely you ever dropped your two eyes on, she sent her. And, Mrs. Meighan, when she got it, was as happy as a mavish in May and as proud as a lord's lady. Half of the parish thronged to see the shawl, and Mrs. Meighan herself carried it to the other half; and the poor woman near lost her sleep altogether with the excitement of the thing.

She was mortal fond of gossip and going about, anyhow, was the Widow Meighan. She was a hard-working woman in her day, in troth; but when

she got the family dhragged up, and that she saw them all shiftin' for themselves—east and west—and not one of them forgettin' her, or forgettin' to give her a helpin' hand, she was at aise with herself and the world, and could afford to go gostherin' with the neighbors; and it was herself knew well how to enjoy that same.

But she usually did her visitin' in raison and in saison—till the Cassimeer came. Then her visitin', as ye may well suppose, knew neither saison or raison, one or other. And when her one son Dinny, who remained at home with her, working the wee farm and holdin' the roof over them both, would come in from the Nor'-aist Park at dinner-time, ravenous with the fair dint of the hunger, and find the hearth black, and neither sign nor token of a dinner, and hear that his mother was doin' padrole with her Cassimeer in the upper end of the parish, Dinny, poor boy, began to suspicion that the same Cassimeer was going to be a sore trial to his temper; and he wished in his heart that it was an armchair poor Annie had sent his mother, or something like it, to keep her at home.

"I wish to goodness," Dinny said, "there would come a daicent thief into the country."

"Musha, for what, Dinny a thaisge?" said his mother.

"Just, mother," says Dinny, "that he might steal your Cassimeer shawl."

"Arragh, Dinny boy, but it's the bad heart ye have," says the mother, "for to be wishin' ill to the beautiful present your poor sister—may God watch over her among the stranger!—your poor sister sent me all the way from the States."

"If you, mother," says Dinny, says he, "come in from a hard mornin's work behind a spade, and the stomach of ye cryin' for its dinner, and that ye found neither trace nor track of dinner afore ye, but found me who should have it waiting, piping hot for ye, gone gallivantin' off to the other end of the parish to show the neighbors a new pair of Cassimeer trousers (suppose) that my sister Annie had sent me, a present from the States—I'm thinkin' your heart would surely takes sides with your

stomach, and not wish very well to my Cassimeer breeches . . . I wish to goodness, mother, it was a pot and pot-stick Annie had sent ye home."

And the widow would shake her head, and turn up her eyes at this, and say, "Well, may the Lord forgive ye, Dinny Meighan, for throwin' slights on my beautiful Cassimeer shawl, like that!"

And Dinny 'ud reply, "Well, mother, if I never have to ask the Lord's forgiveness for greater, I'll not trimble much when I'm awaitin'* on."

And his mother thought there was surely small hope for Dinny when he could cast a slight like that on her Cassimeer shawl, and never feel a wrinkle in his conscience.

The first day poor Dinny lost his dinner over the Cassimeer shawl, he didn't take it so badly at all in his heart, no matter how much he might purtend. Nor the second day nor third day either. But when he met with the same trial five times inside of one week, and it seemed like that the Cassimeer was goin' to cost him his dinner as a steady thing, faith! Dinny got rumbunctious the fifth time, and as he very well thought that it was more fitter for his mother to be bendin' over the dinner-pot every day than sthravaguin' the parish with the bottom of the trunk on her back, he was on this reliev'in' his mind to her respectfully and quietly, and kindly, too—for Dinny Meighan was never the boy to turn the ill word on his own mother—but very seriously; for he was detarmined that, Cassimeer or no Cassimeer, he wasn't to be done out of his dinners for the time to come. "For I used to admire and think it a handsome shawl, when it come first, mother. But I now see that the beauty a man sees in a thing depends entirely on the state of his stomach. Every time, now, that I miss another dinner over it, that shawl is getting to look more and more like a broken and badly patched pratie-bag."

And, "Dinny, Dinny!" says she, "are ye not afeerd of a judgment fallin' from Heaven on ye—to talk that way of my grand Cassimeer?"

*About to die.

"I'm afeerd only," says Dinny back to her, "afeerd only, mother, that I should apologize to the pratie-bag. It brings a dinner; and the Cassimeer loses me one. And I'm afeerd, moreover, mother darlin', that if ye don't hide the same Cassimeer under the lowermost article in the clothes-chist, and then put a good strong padlock on the chist, I'll be tempted to do something desperate to it." It's in a fright of a temper Dinny, the soul, was: and, indeed, small wonder for that.

And whenever Dinny got warm like this, the Widow Meighan always found it a good plan either to coax him to go out up the hill and let the temper blow off him, or else to go out herself, and remain without till the boy would have simmered down. And this time she said, says she, "Well, Dinny a bhuachaill, you're past yourself just now, and so I'm steppin' without, till you go past the boil."

But the widow hadn't reached the door when she halted up sudden, and she says all in a fright: "In the name of Peter, Dinny my heart, who do you think is crossin' Nell Dinneen's mearin' below?"

"I don't know, mother," says Dinny, says he, shortly enough, "nor what's more—not giving you a short answer—do I care."

The widow was too flurried to mind Dinny's shortness. Says she: "Of all the unwelcome women this side of Kingdom-come, it's no other than your poor father—may God be merciful to him!—your



poor father's Cousin Bid from the Oileigh parish. She has trolloped over ten miles of country this mornin', and is making, sure enough, for the Dhrimholme parish, on a visit to her Uncle John. Dinny a chara, I'll close meself into the room here, and you'll say I'm gone over to help lay out Peggy Carney, of the Altbeag, that died this mornin'. I would as soon meet the scarlet faiver as your father's Cousin Bid, for she's an ill-tongued, ill-hearted, bitter pill of a woman—and it goes sore against the grain of me to have to show her the fair face, as I always do; and though she shows me the fair face, too, I always feel that she's cuttin' me throat inside her heart, while she's speakin' me smooth and sweet. I'll just step inside the room-door here till she's gone again."

"Mother," says Dinny, says he, "if it's your notion that I'm goin' to sill me sowl tellin' lies for you to my father's Cousin Bid, or to anywan else, while

you listen from behind the doore, you're laborin' under a very great mistake entirely, let me tell you. If you want anywan to tell lies for ye, mother, just stay out here and tell them yourself."

"Do as your mother tells ye, Dinny," was all she said, and stepped in behind the room-door, and closed it. But she opened it again to put out her head, and call under her 'breath, "And, Dinny, hang up that Cassimeer where that woman 'll be sure to see it."

In faith, it was small enough was the likin' even Dinny had ever for his father's Cousin Bid, and it was less still was his likin' for her since, on the Candlemass twelvemonth afore, she had carried her ill-heart and bad tongue over to Derryalt, where he was coortin', and set purty wee Mary Kennedy's people again' him. And he then promised if it should ever come his way to do his father's Cousin Bid an ill turn, he'd think three times afore he'd allow his conscience to hold him.

When his father's Cousin Bid stepped over the threshel, with a wee bunch of greeneries atween her fingers and a ready "God save all here!" on her tongue, Dinny, who was sittin' by the fire with his back to the door, just turned his head slow, and he looked her up and down, and then give her a nod. He pointed to a chair, without puttin' a move out of himself, and Bid, a good bit mystified, went and sat down on it. And Dinny begun lookin' into the fire.

"Maise, Dinny," says she, "what's makin' you look so mortal glum? Or what's the matter with ye, at all, at all?"

Then Dinny turned his eyes again on her, and he says sorrowfully:

"Bridget Managhan, ye ought to feel sore ashamed of yerself."

"And for why, Dinnis Meighan?" says Bid, says she, bridlin'.

"Bridget Managhan," says Dinny, says he, reproachfully, "ye add insult to injury."

Bid was both mixed and mystified. Says she:

"For goodness' sake, Dinny Meighan, tell me what are ye dhrivin' at, anyhow?"

Dinny put up one hand to one eye and, as it seemed to the consternated Bid,

rubbed away a tear; and he then put up another hand to the other eye, and rubbed away another tear.

"Bridget Managhan," says he then, turnin' hurtin' eyes on her. "Bridget Managhan," says he, "ye never came anear either the wake or the funeral, and you're the last in the worl' I would have expected such a slight from. I say ye ought to feel sore ashamed of yerself."

"The wake!" says Bid, all open-mouthed. "And the funeral!" says she, with the eyes of her startin'.

"The wake," says Dinny, says he, solemn, "and the funeral—never came anear one or the other of them, and never sent as much as a message. I say, how can ye show your face in this house—and not a blush on it either?"

"For the Lord's sake, Dinny Meighan," says Bridget, says she, "will ye tell me at oncet what wake ye're talkin' of, and what funeral?"

Poor Dinny looked into the fire, and, says he, with a blurt, "Me poor mother's wake, of course, and funeral—may God be merciful to her sowl! for it's she was the good mother to me, anyhow—barrin' at times."

"Dinny, Dinny Meighan, a mhic," says she, all alarmed, "ye don't railly mean to tell me that you mother's dead?"

"Aye, dead, poor woman," says Dinny, says he, wipin' his eyes with both his sleeves, "dead, and the green quilt over her. Don't try for to tell me, Bridget Managhan," says he, "that ye didn't hear it and know all about it. Don't try for to tell me such an a story—for I'll not take it in."

"God rest her, poor woman!" says Bid first. And then says she: "Dinny Meighan, may I never move from the ground I'm sittin' on, or never ate the bread of corn again, if I'm not now in the first place I ever heard tale, tidin's, whisper, or breath of your poor mother's daith."

"Och, och!" says Dinny, says he, as busy as he could be with the troubles of his own mind.

"God help ye and support ye in your trouble, poor sowl!" says she. "I knew," says she, "for I heerd it from my Uncle Andy at the fair of the Purt (last

Chewsday was a month) that your poor mother was complainin' a bit; but a word further I never heerd. Meself thought it was only the oul' complaint of the win' about the heart was troublin' her, and that she'd work it off in a couple of days. What was it took her?"

"Oh, just the win' about the heart—her oul' complaint. It struck her first (this last time) of a Chewsday night, just as she was milkin' the brannet cow. Meself give her a hot dhrink with plenty of pepper in it, and put her to bed, thinkin' she would be well again, and as sound as a bell in the mornin'. But faroir! she never, poor woman, knew what it was to be well again. It was worse she was, instead of better, in the mornin'. The win' was all round her heart; she could feel it rollin' and rollin' about like a large pattatie; and it gathered and gathered till it was the size of your head afore the night come; and next mornin' it was the size of a hand-shaking of hay; and from that on we knew there wasn't any hope for her. We did all we could, and Molly Carribin of Kilraine tried five cures on her; but it was only worse she got. Father Pat, God bliss him, we had to rouse him out of his bed in the middle of the night, a Sathurday night, and he come and give her the last rites, and bid her Godspeed on the big journey she was goin' to undertake. And in the early hours of Sunday mornin', just near about the screek o' day, she,—she—" poor Dinny, he broke down here and blubbered—"she bid me good-by, and asked for God to b-bliss me and watch over me; and—and—then she w-w-went away with herself. Booh-hooh!" And poor Dinny, the soul, blurted and cried.

"Maise, Dinny," says Bid, says she: "poor sowl. I'm sorry from my heart for your trouble! And to think that I should never have heerd one word of it."

"It was a splendid wake," says Dinny, says he, more cheerily and proud-like, "a splendid wake and a grand funeral. At the wake the house was filled to the doores; and at the funeral there was half a mile of ground, and ye couldn't dhrop a pin on it but it would fall on someone's head."

"A proud day for ye, Dinny," says Bid.

"Yes," says Dinny. "But that isn't what I have wanted to tell ye . . . Are ye listenin' to me, Bid Managhan?"

"I'm listenin' as hard as I can," says Bid, says she, leanin' forrid.

"My mother, my poor mother (may Heaven be her bed!), she—she—well, everyone knows she had a bit of a temper of her own!"

Bid Managhan she gave 'a snort at this, and then she took a snuff out of the snuff-box. And then, says she, "There's few 'ud deny that."

"A temper she had," says Dinny, says he, "and a tongue."

"And a tongue—yis," says Bid, says she, clickin' down the lid on her snuff-box with venom. "Did I hear any noise in that room below?" says she then, hasty, and lookin' hard at the closed room-door. And sure enough there had come from the room somethin' strangely like a "Hagh!" comin' out from atween clenched teeth.

"Maybe, indeed, ye did," says Dinny, says he, and he not one bit discommoded, "for me poor calf, poor thing, got the elf-shot the day afore yesterday, and for heat's sake and comfort, I took it and put it intil the room; and it breathes hard sometimes . . . But as I was sayin'," says he, "though the poor woman is now dead, and we should maybe leave her wee faults in the grave with her . . . That calf is breathin' hard; it's a painful complaint is the elf-shot . . . leave her wee faults in the grave with her," says he, "still we can't deny at all, at all, that she had her little share of faults, like the rest of us—and maybe a thrifle more."

"Aye, and maybe a thrifle more," says Bid, says she, with great satisfaction entirely, near a'most smackin' her lips over it.

"The poor woman's dead and gone," says Dinny, "and only for that I might go further—though I am her own son—and say that she might aisily ha' been a better-hearted and candider friend to some people—yourself for one," says he.

Bid, she felt mightily encouraged by the tone of Dinny's remarks. She gave



another snort. "The poor woman's dead, and gone to her reckonin'," says she; "and only for that I might go further and say that she was as bitter-tongued and ill-hearted a woman as ever stepped in shoe-leather, and—"

"Go on," says Dinny, says he. "Don't mind; it's that calf."

"And only she's dead and gone," says she, "and I hope got forgiveness from the Lord—only for that," says she, "I would say of her that I'd prefer gettin' a process any day to meetin' her. For, though I knew that she would cut my throat, if she could, with one smile, myself had to meet her with a fair face and smile back at her . . . That calf of yours must be in sore trouble, Dinny . . . And there's the solemn sacred truth to ye. And only the poor woman's dead and gone—and forgiven, I hope—I could say all that of her—and more. And more."

"I know it," says Dinny, shaking his head sorrowful-like. "I know it," says he. "Sure, I only know it too well—to me own pain. But you'll be rejoiced in the inside of your heart, Bid Managhan, to hear what's the news I have for ye, and that I've been comin' to. My mother,

poor woman, had her eyes opened to her little faults afore she died," says he.

"Indeed," says Bid, surprised.

"Indeed!" says Dinny. "More especially had she her eyes opened—by some sthroke of grace—to her onchristian traitment of you, and . . . Bad snuff to that calf, but it's unmannerly . . . and, I say, died repentant, and prayin' to have your forgiveness."

Says Bid, triumphant, "I'm a delighted woman to hear it. And—and—I suppose I must grant forgiveness to her—as she's dead," says she.

"It's good of ye—troth, it's good of ye, Bid," says Dinny, says he; "and myself told her to die comforted, for that Bid Managhan was always a generous woman and a forgivin' one."

Bid just lowered her head to this.

"And Bid," says Dinny, "me poor mother considered she owed ye restitution for all the ill things she ever sayed of ye behind your back," says he.

"I'm glad to hear that the poor woman got into a Christian state of mind—even on her death-bed," says Bid, says she.

Dinny got up, and went over to the dhresser; and stoopin' under it, he drew out a pair of grand new spring-side boots that Micky Gallagher, the shoemaker, had only fetched home the night afore; and he fetched them over and left them down at Bid Managhan's feet.

"She said," said he, as he left them down, "it is my death-bed desire that my husband's Cousin Bid from the Oil-eigh parish should get my pair of new boots in part token of restitution for wrongs done her. So, Bid, there ye are," says he.

Poor Bid she opened her eyes with wonder and delight, and says she, "Well, may God grant speedy forgiveness to the poor woman, and bring her straight to Heaven without e'er a look-in upon Purgatory good or bad," says the delighted girl. "I think," says she, beginnin' without any more delay to take off her the boots she had on her, "I think," says she, "as these ould boots I have on me aren't hardly daicent enough to go visitin' at my Uncle Andy's in, I think I'll just put these new ones on me—"

"Bad snuff, say I again, to that calf. Yis surely, Bid, wear them on ye to your Uncle Andy's," says Dinny, says he.

"Just see to that now, how parfect they fit me," says Bid, says she, steppin' out in them across the floor, and tryin' to see them herself and to show them to Dinny at the same time. "They lie like a pair of gloves, Dinny," says she.

"One 'ud think," says Dinny, "that Micky Gallagher used your own foot for a last," says he.

"It's prayin' for your kind mother's sowl I'll be," says she, "every time ever I put out my foot in them."

"Thanky, Bid; thanky," says Dinny. "She'll be watchin' ye, and hearin' to ye out of heaven; and it's herself 'ill be the delighted woman to see that the brogues is so nate to your feet."

"May the delights of Heaven be with her always," says Bid from the depths of her heart. "If there's wan woman more nor another who desarnes Heaven, for her right-livin' ways, and her good and charitable heart, myself doesn't know who that woman was, if it wasn't your mother," says she. "And," says she, "Dinny, I'd advise ye to look after that calf for it's sufferin' sore. Did ye hear that groan out of it?" says she.

"Thanky, thanky kindly, Bid, for your nice words. Och! yes, I'm goin' to doctor the calf; I sent wee Johnnie Eamonn over the hill an hour ago for Neddy Pat Ward, the cow-doctor. He'll soon be here, and he'll leave the calf better than new again," says he.

"I'm intendin'," says Bid, says she, "to call round by the graveyard, and say the rosary over your poor mother. God rest the good woman! Dinny a bhua-chail, did ye ever in all your born days see a better fit anyhow?" And Bid was walkin' the floor and holdin' up her skirts.

"One would think they grew on your feet, Bid," says Dinny. "But that isn't all. My poor mother sayed moreover, 'It is my last desire and request that my late husband's Cousin, Bid Managhan, should, as a slight token of restitution for the evil I have wrongfully done her in my heart, have my best linsey-woolsey skirt which hangs in the corner over the

outshot bed,' and accordingly," says Dinny—he getting up and stretchin' to the corner over the out-shot bed, and reachin' down his mother's lovely brown linsey-woolsey skirt to the astonished Bid—"Just slip it on ye over your own skirt, Bid," says he; "it 'll be the handiest way of carryin' it."

Poor Bid. She couldn't speak for a full minute with the downright dint of the astonishment, only just hold out the skirt in her hand, as far away from her as she could, and gaze at it.

And when she come to her speeches, "Maise, may all the angels and saints and holy pathriots," says she, "unite together in carryin' your poor blessed and pious mother, body and sowl, str'ight to the heaven's hall-door."

"Bad snuff say I again to that calf," says Dinny, says he, "with his groanin' and gruntin' there; he has no more manners nor breedin' than if he never was brought up about a Christian house."





"Restitution!" says Bid, says she, "for evil done me in her heart! It was surely the ravin' of daith that must a' been on the poor woman, for after all the pious and heavenly thoughts with which the poor bliss'd woman's heart was crivanned, there wasn't room for a midge to wink one of its eyes. Restitution, inagh!"

"Oh, she wasn't by any means a bad-hearted woman, me mother," says Dinny modestly; "nor, though I say it who maybe shouldn't, was she a woman that was ever given to an ill-tongue or ill-temper, or to thinkin' bad of any mortal under the sun," says he.

"Ill-tongue or ill-temper!" says Bid with hot indignation as she stood in the middle of the floor and slipped the linsay-woolsey over her head; "I would just like to see the individual who'd even to your saintly sowled mother, ill-tongue, ill-thought, or ill-temper. I'd like, I say to see that individual—that impident and lying individual!" says Bid, shaking her fist at the air and grindin' her teeth. "Dinny," says she, "I'll be steppin' on for Uncle Andy's. I'll look a whole swell in such a skirt and boots. Uncle Andy's people 'oll not

know me at all, at all. I'm goin' to call round by the graveyard, Dinny, to say two rosaries for the repose of your bliss'd mother's sowl."

"I'll be for ever thankful to ye," says Dinny, says he.

"Don't say thanks, Dinny," says Bid, says she, solemn, "if ye don't want to insult me."

"And as for me poor mother lookin' down at ye from the threshel of heaven, she'll pour blissin's back upon ye till ye're soaked to the skin with them and wade home wetshod. But, Bid, through me poor

departed mother's grace, ye're goin' to be a still bigger swell yet, afore ye start for your Uncle Andy's."

"What!" says Bid, says she. "Ye don't surely mane for to say—"

"I mane," says Dinny, says he, "for to say nothing only this—me poor mother, God rest her—"

"Amen, amen, with all my heart and sowl," says Bid.

"—Says," says Dinny, "likewise, to my late husband's dearly beloved cousin, and my good and sincere friend, Bridget Managhan, of the Oileigh, I do hereby give, laive, and bequaith my beautiful Cassimeer shawl."

There suddenly come a groan from the room at this that made Bid Managhan start in the sait she sat upon.

"God help us, and His blissin' be about us all, day and night," says Bid, says she, cuttin' the sign of the cross; "but doesn't that poor ill baste in the room below groan like a human. Dinny, what room did yer poor mother die in?"

"In that same room," says Dinny. "And," says Dinny, never mindin' the frightened look that came into Bid's face, "as I was sayin'—'Grant, give, bequaith, and bestow my magnificent Cas-

THE WIDOW MEIGHAN'S CASSIMEER SHAWL 761

simeer shawl—the magnificentest in the barony, bar none—the aforesaid shawl bein' the same which Partlan McCue fetched from Philadelphia, from my daughter Annie to me; and I wish her health, wealth, and the Lord's blissin' while she wears it and two threads of it stick together."

The eyes of Bid Managhan, as she listened to this, grew bigger and bigger, and when Dinny got to his feet and opened the chist and took out and unfolded his mother's Cassimeer shawl, and held it up for Bid to see, the eyes of her were as large as small tay-sau-cers.

"Dinny Meighan," says she, when she got her breath with her, "durin' all the days I've been walkin' this worl', the sight of me never yet beheld a beautifuller or a grander or a magnificenter legacy than that. Dinny Meighan, that poor mother of yours died in the odium of sanctity, and the sowl of her went up and into heaven, on the shoulders of the seven vargins, the seven patriots, and the seven archangels afore the breath was gone out of her body. Thanky, just slip it on me shoulders, Dinny. Did ye—now tell me the gospel truth—did ye ever see a greater swell than I am? But what will Uncle Andy's ones say? Dinny, I'm goin'; and goin' round by the graveyard in order to say three rosaries for the everlastin' repose of that sainted woman's sowl, your mother. Good-by, Dinny, and may God comfort ye in your great loss, and His blessin' ever be about you, and about your house and place." And she rolled up her old boots in her old shawl and placed them under her arm. "I may as well carry these with me," says she, "for maybe I'll meet some poor

body 'ill be glad to get them," says she.

Says Dinny, says he, "That's so, surely. And good-by and good luck, and God be with ye," says he.

And down the floor she walked, headin' for the door, and she proud as a paycock that had got a new coat of feathers, and steppin' as pernicketty as if it was on eggs she was walkin'.

But with that the room-door (which was just inside the door of the house) was slammed open, and out of it steps the Widow Meighan and the face of her both black and blue and red all at the one time, with the fair dint of rage.

Bid Managhan, she opened her mouth for a screech, but the sorra a screech or even a sound would come, and she just went white, and flopped down upon the floor, same as you'd drop a wet sack—flopped down sitting-wise, both her mouth and her eyes as wide open as ever they'd go, starin' at the vision afore her.

The Widow Meighan, without a word out of her, though her face was bustin' with all she felt inside of her, just dhropped upon her knees and unlaced her Sunday boots off Bid Managhan's feet, that seemed just stretched out to her for the purpose. She threw Bid's feet from her when she was done with them, and she took her beautiful Cassi-



meer off her shoulders, and then stood her up, and made her drop off the skirt. She stooped over Bid while the poor woman, with hands that shook like a mill-hopper, give her own old brogues a hasty fastenin' upon her, and drew her own old shawl over her shoulders, and then, "Go," says she, pointin' to the door—"Go, Bid Managhan, and never let the evil shadow of you darken my threshel again."

But poor Bid needed little encouragement to go. She took the door as speedy as she could, and, a crest-fallen woman, she went on her journey again to her Uncle Andy's.

And then, when the widow thought it time to give her attentions to her unworthy son, she turned to open the flood-gates on him. But, inagh! there was no Dinny there; for when he got the two women seriously engaged with each other, he thought it a good opportunity to go out by the back-door and look at the weather.

But the weather must 'a' been a long way off that day; bekase it was two days and two nights afore ever he come in again.

And, I tell you it was somethin' longer afore Bid Managhan come in again.

Somethin' a great deal longer.

Through the Wall

BY I. A. R. WYLIE

Author of "The Higher Duty," etc.

I

THERE had been an accident. He did not know what sort of accident or when and where it had taken place. All he could be sure of was that there had been a terrific, deafening crash and the high, piteous scream of a woman. He remembered both so distinctly because they were the last things he had heard, and now they echoed on through his aching brain, mingling themselves confusedly with other and softer sounds. Someone was whispering: there was the rustle of a skirt, again a faint voice asking for water, and the click of a glass. He did not bother to open his eyes. He lay still and lazily tried to piece his memories together. For a long time it seemed as if there was nothing left him from the past but the recollection of those two sounds, but presently a sharp pain in his right side hastened his returning consciousness and his mind, groping through the mist, caught hold of his life's threads where they had been so roughly broken off and began to disentangle them.

He had been in the act of lifting a glass to his lips when it had all happened. There had been wine in the glass. He had been drinking to something or somebody. To whom? To what? He frowned with the effort of remembering. Then he smiled somewhat cynically. Of course, it had been to his return home.

He had been watching the fields flash past the carriage window, thinking of the years that had drifted since he had bidden them farewell in the heyday of his youth and ambition, and in a sudden fit of grim gayety he had lifted his glass to the Old Country, to his home, to himself. The smile that lifted the gray mustache now was but the continuation of that mood, a mood in which laughter and tears had clasped hands and mingled.

Colonel Robert Mowbray opened his eyes. He knew quite well now who he was and all that had preceded this moment. It was as if his soul had wandered out into space and reluctantly had returned and now sat upon the threshold of its old dwelling, viewing the scarred drab walls with sorrowful and unloving

eyes. He would have been glad to have drifted back into the shadows of oblivion, but that was no longer possible. He had forced himself back to full consciousness, and now he looked about him, taking in his surroundings with a languid interest.

His bed stood in a sort of narrow cubicle. On either side a wooden partition rose three-quarters of the way up the wall. At the far end a screen shielded the window light from him. Evidently he was in a hospital ward.

His curiosity satisfied, he was about to close his eyes again when the screen was pushed a little on one side and a bright faced nurse entered carrying a tray with bandages.

When she saw that he was awake she nodded cheerfully to him.

"That's right!" she said. "How are you feeling now?"

"Pretty well," he returned. "My leg hurts—I don't know which and I can't be bothered to think. What's the matter with me?"

"Your leg is broken and you have a cut on the head. Otherwise you are all right. You don't need to worry."

"I don't!" he said.

He submitted impatiently to the deft manipulation of her fingers about his head, but after a time, partly to hide the fact that he was in some pain and partly out of interest, he began to ask questions.

"How did it happen?" he demanded.

She laid her finger on her lips.

"The express ran into a freight train. But you mustn't talk!"

"I shall if I want to," he retorted irritably. "It doesn't hurt me."

"Not you, perhaps, but your neighbors."

"Oh!"

He relapsed into a tight-lipped silence. Then he whispered:

"Who are they—I mean the people on either side?"

"On your left there is a poor third-class passenger and on your right a lady. You see, it is rather a mixed ward, but we couldn't help it. There were so many injured and we had not much room. Later on we shall be able to move you."

"I should hope so!" he muttered.

He lay still while she finished the bandage.

From somewhere quite close to him, as it seemed, he heard a low, long drawn sigh. It sounded so sad and so patient that it stirred him uncomfortably, and he looked at his nurse with his bushy eyebrows raised.

"Is that—she?" he asked.

"Yes, poor little woman!"

"Why do you say 'poor little woman?'" he asked petulantly. "Is she 'worse off than the rest of us?'"

"Yes, I think she is. She has so much to bear and she is so frail and delicate and brave."

"Oh!"

Colonel Mowbray collapsed again. Then his stern, rather handsome features, softened.

"All right!" he said boyishly. "I won't talk!"

He closed his eyes until the nurse had gone out of the room, but when everything was quiet he opened them again and watched the rays of evening sunshine which fell on the foot of his bed between the screen and the partition. He could not sleep, and there was nothing else to do but watch it gradually fading—and to think.

Somehow he did not feel quite the same as he had done before the nurse had come. Then he had felt bitter and not a little sorry for himself. Now, such self-pity seemed petty and cowardly, when next door a delicate woman was suffering—and suffering without a groan or complaint. After all, she was a woman and he was a man—a strong man, moreover, not unaccustomed to wounds and privation.

And then, as far as he was concerned, what did it matter? The thought flashed through him, bearing with it the acid taste of his old bitterness. What he endured affected no one. No one would mind. But his neighbor? He imagined her to himself.

Perhaps she was pretty. Surely, someone cared. Surely someone was hurrying to her side, to share with her every twinge of pain by the communicative power of love and sympathy? Possibly she was engaged—or even married. At any rate, she

was not alone, and he did not envy her the knowledge that someone was unhappy on her account. It is better to be alone.

Colonel Mowbray lay very still. Almost unconsciously he went on thinking about his neighbor, wondering if she was still in pain or if she slept. The sunlight faded. Dusk crept over the silent ward, and presently he fell into a slight doze. How long it lasted he did not know. When he awoke it was night.

There was a faint yellow reflection on the ceiling of the next cubicle and someone was speaking.

"Nurse—I don't want to bother—am I very impatient? I try not to be. But shall I never be able to go to sleep again?"

The Colonel opened his eyes wide. It was not the words with their undercurrent of pathos; it was not that in a flash he knew that through those hours when he had believed her asleep she had been awake fighting a brave silent battle against pain, it was the voice itself which touched him to the heart. In all his life he did not believe he had ever heard so much sweetness as those few broken tones contained.

"You will be better to-morrow," he heard the nurse answer. "Take this, dear."

There was a low "Thank you" and then silence.

The light faded from the ceiling. The nurse's footsteps hesitated before his cubicle and then passed on.

The Colonel's eyes were still wide open. He could not go to sleep. Without knowing why, he listened intently to every sound that came from the right-hand cubicle. He even held his breath and lifted himself a little on his elbow in order to hear better. Sometimes he imagined that he heard her breathing softly and regularly, and sometimes he thought he heard her sigh, and each time he grumbled at himself for not minding his own business.

"If she would only go to sleep, then, perhaps, I might be able to!" he thought in an outburst of discontent. Though what the two things had to do with each other he would have found it hard to explain.

The hours passed. He counted eleven—twelve—one—two. There was no sound. Certainly she was asleep. No one in pain could lie so still and quiet as she did. He turned a little on one side with a sigh of satisfaction, prepared to close his eyes.

There was a sudden movement in the cubicle on his left. The injured third-class passenger had either waked up or had recovered consciousness. After a series of impatient, restless tossings he began to curse loudly and bitterly.

Colonel Mowbray's heart stood still with alarm.

Supposing he should wake her!

Regardless of his own burning head and aching limb he dragged himself into a half-sitting posture and put his mouth against the wooden partition.

"Shut up!" he hissed between his teeth.

"'Oo 'Shut up?" came the retort, after a moment's surprised silence.

"I did and I mean it. Shut up!"

There was a snort of pain and indignation.

"I like that! If you 'ad two ribs stove in—"

"I have a broken leg and a split head. I dare say I have quite as much cause to whine as you have. Hold your tongue and don't make a noise like a puppy with its tail trodden on. You are disturbing the lady—"

"Wot laidy?"

"There's a young lady next door in great pain and she can't get to sleep. I suppose you can oblige a lady, can't you?"

There was the sound of a heavy frame falling back among the pillows.

"Orl right, guv'ner. Keep yer 'air on. I wont worrit her," came the assurance.

Then, after a moment:

"I saiy, guv'ner! I 'ope as 'ow I didn't wake the laidy hup?"

"I don't think so. I've been listening."

"That's orl right. Good-night, guv."

"Good-night!"

An absolute unbroken silence fell upon the ward. Both men, unknown to each other, lay and listened. But there was no movement in the right-hand cubicle, and presently the Colonel sank into an uneasy sleep.

II

The doctor rubbed his hands cheerfully.

"Six or seven weeks, my dear sir," he said, "and you'll be on your feet, I've no doubt. What are a few weeks to a young man at your time of life? You mustn't grumble."

Colonel Mowbray was not thinking of grumbling. Nor did he take any notice of the facetious reference to his years. He plucked the doctor's sleeve and drew him down so he could put his lips close to his ear.

"Doctor," he whispered, "how's your patient?"

The cheerful medical face grew puzzled.

"Really, my dear sir, I have so many patients—"

"I mean—the one next door."

"Ah, my broken-ribbed bricklayer?"

The Colonel pshawed impatiently.

"No—no. The lady."

"Ah, the lady—little Miss Adelaide? She is better this morning."

The doctor's eyes twinkled slyly.

"Friend of yours, eh?"

"No!" snapped the Colonel, scenting the slyness.

Then, as the doctor beat a retreat, he added under his breath: "Jackass!"

However, a minute afterwards the grim mouth relaxed and he smiled.

"If anyone is a jackass, I am," he thought. "I wonder what was the matter with me last night? I must have been delirious."

He fell to wondering what she was like. He imagined that she was very small and delicate. He was sure she had large, steadfast eyes and a white skin which grew easily bright with color. Everything about her would be dainty, gentle and soft—fairy-like. Yes, fairy-like. That was the word that would describe her best, something far removed from the big sporting type which so revolted his old-fashioned ideals.

In the middle of his reflections he was interrupted by some one calling. He recognized the voice at once, and was indignant at his own delight.

"Neighbor!"

"I beg your pardon—?"

The Colonel sat up in his surprise and gave his injured limb a twist which, under other circumstances, would have called forth some strong, soldier-like expressions.

"I thought I heard you talking," the gentle voice went on, "otherwise I should not have ventured to disturb you. I want to thank you very, very much for last night. It was so thoughtful of you to bother about me."

"Please don't mention it," the Colonel stammered. "I understand that you had been awake a good deal and—eh—"

He found no way to finish out the sentence. He felt that he would be making a fool of himself if he explained that he had been listening half the night to her breathing, so he added lamely, "I hope you are better this morning?"

"Much better, thank you. After you asked that poor man next door to be quiet, I managed to get to sleep."

"You were awake all that time?"

"Yes."

"I never heard you!" he blurted out.

"I tried to keep quiet," she answered.

"That was damn plucky of you!"

The Colonel was not and never had been a lady's man, and it must at once be admitted that he occasionally swore, though with the most innocent intentions in the world.

He thought he heard her laugh quietly to herself.

"I don't see that it was very plucky," she said. "I didn't hear you either, and I know you must have had your share of pain."

"That's quite another thing," he retorted. "I am a man and you are a girl."

She made no answer to this and a silence fell between them. Colonel Mowbray wondered if she had fallen asleep. Otherwise he would have liked to continue the conversation.

Presently he ventured to ask:

"Will you be laid up in this rabbit-hutch long?"

"I don't know. Some weeks, I am afraid. You see, my back was injured and that always takes time. But I have nothing to complain about. Other poor people have had much more to bear."

After a minute, he added, in spite of a disgusted knowledge that he was yielding to an inexplicable attack of curiosity: "But the time will go quickly with you. No doubt you will have relations—or friends coming to look after you."

Again there was a moment's silence before she answered, and this time the silence was heavy with an unspoken sadness.

"I do not think so," she said at last, very slowly. "All my friends and relations are far away. Most of them are dead."

He bit his lip. He felt that he had jarred roughly upon a new wound, and his heart went out to her. After all, loneliness is well enough for man, but for a woman it is something tragic. And her voice sounded pathetically young and wistful.

"I am sorry," he said. "I, too, am quite alone. Nobody will bother about me. When I first found myself in this—er—place, I was wild that I hadn't been given a room to myself. Now I am really quite glad. We shall be able to keep each other company."

He said it as a matter of course—he who disliked chattering and was proud of his bitter, lonely independence. He told himself that he was sorry for her. It was the only reasonable excuse he could think of.

"It is very good of you," she said, "but I fear I shall be a poor companion. You see, just at first, I must not talk much."

Colonel Mowbray nodded to himself. "Of course not!" he said severely. "You must go to sleep at once!"

A minute later, when his nurse entered, he met her reproof with defiance.

"We weren't given a tongue in order that we might have the pleasure of holding it," he muttered. "I believe I cheered her up and I feel better myself. Nurse!"

"What is it?"

She was renewing his bandage and wondering at his abnormal patience.

"When do you get out of this business?"

"I have a free hour to-day if that's what you mean."

"Would you do me a favor?"

"If it's not against the prescribed regulations."

Colonel Mowbray deigned to look persuasive. His stern eyes and voice could be most gentle and ingratiating when he chose.

"Look here, you'll find plenty of money in my trousers-pocket, and if there isn't enough I'll write you a check. Go to a good florist's and tell him to send in a heap of fresh flowers—regularly, every day."

The nurse stared.

"You want flowers?"

"No—no!" His bronzed cheeks turned scarlet. "They are not for me—for the lady next door. She will like them. And, nurse—"

"Yes?"

"Do you think you might be passing a news-agent?"

She smiled.

"I dare say."

"You might tell him to send in some papers."

"Sporting papers?"

"Certainly not. No; women's papers—you know. I saw one once. *Home Circle* I think it was called, or some such driveling name as that. You know the style. They might amuse her."

"Very well. I'll do what I can."

When the nurse had gone Colonel Mowbray lay back and smiled to himself.

"Poor little thing!" he thought. "Poor little girl!"

That afternoon he had his reward.

There was a cry of delight from the next cubicle. He could almost see how she buried her face in the rich blossoms. He believed that there were tears in her eyes and that her lips trembled. He did not know how he guessed all this. Perhaps it was because there was a new note in the beautiful voice—a note of happiness unalloyed with weariness and pain.

"Oh, how lovely they are!" she cried. "How lovely! The whole world looks different now! How can I ever thank you, neighbor?"

But the Colonel turned over and pretended to be asleep.

III

"Good-morning, Miss Adelaide!"

"Good-morning, neighbor!"

"How are you this morning?"

"Better, thank you."

Such was their regular greeting.

Six weeks had passed. Looking back on them, the Colonel was not sure that they had not been the happiest weeks of his life.

At any rate, the doctor had told him he might be moved if he wished it, and he had not made the slightest effort to make use of the permission. He lay stubbornly in bed and talked with his "friend," as he called her, on the other side of the partition. His left-hand neighbor had been taken elsewhere, so they disturbed no one. They had not seen each other. It would not have been possible, even if they had wished it, since he lay in the men's side of the ward and she in the women's, but, indeed, they seemed to have no curiosity about each other.

The Colonel, in fact, though he would have given a year's pay to have caught a glimpse of her face, had so little desire for her to see him that he avoided the very subject of their eventual meeting, and proved himself a master of strategy where personal questions were concerned.

"After all," he thought, "it is better so for the present. When she knows what an old bear I am she will be afraid to talk to me any more."

She, on her side, was equally reticent, so they chatted together about the world, of what they had read and seen, but never about themselves. And every day he found the sound of her voice sweeter and more soothing.

On this particular morning he thought he caught a note of sadness in its quiet tones.

"I heard the doctor tell you that you could move if you wished it," she said to him as he ate his breakfast. "Shall you?"

"No, I sha'n't!" he said. "I don't feel strong enough. Besides, where am I to go to? I like being here."

"Oh, you can't really like it!" she said wonderingly.

"At any rate, if I went away I shouldn't have you to talk to, should I? That's what I like. I have never missed any human being before, but I shall miss you."

There was a little silence after this confession and then he heard her say timidly:

"I should miss you too, Neighbor. You have been so good to me. The flowers—"

"What are they this morning?" he interrupted hastily.

"Roses—dark red roses."

"I should like to see one."

He heard a little scrambling movement, and presently a red blossom fluttered over the top of the partition and dropped lightly on his coverlet.

"See how strong I am getting!" she said brightly.

He picked the flower up and held it to his face. He held it there a long time and then he laid it tenderly on the table beside him.

"Thank you," he said. "Thank you."

After a moment she went on:

"Isn't it strange how well we have got to know each other? And yet I have never seen your face or you mine. I wonder if you have made a fancy picture of me as I have of you?"

The Colonel lifted his head with a movement of trouble and surprise. The subject was a new one.

"What do you imagine I look like?" he asked.

She laughed.

Usually it pleased him when she laughed. To-day it hurt him. He did not know why.

"I can only go by what your voice seems to describe to me," she said. "Do you know, it is rather a pleasant voice, so vigorous and crisp and full. It makes me think of a tall, strong, broad-shouldered man with bold features and bright eyes. I have added a mustache. Am I right?"

Colonel Mowbray looked at the glass at his bedside.

"Yes, that's right enough," he said, and then to himself he added—"and there are a hundred wrinkles and the mustache is gray. I wonder if she has thought of that?"

But he did not ask her. He only went on quietly:

"I also have drawn a picture of you. I am quite certain it is a correct one, because only one sort of woman could have your voice. You are very small, especially your hands and feet. Your hair is fair and inclined to curl. Your eyes are large and clear. They look you straight in the face, but they are rather sad, as eyes go. Am I right?"

"It sounds better than the reality, but on the whole—yes."

"You are very pretty."

"No—no! There you are quite wrong!"

Colonel Mowbray shook his head.

"You can contradict if it amuses you," he said, "but I *know*. You are like your voice—and your voice is the most beautiful thing I have ever—"

He stopped short, startled by his own words and his own tone. They glowed with a warmth he did not recognize.

"I beg your pardon!" he stammered. "But you don't know what it has been to me all these weeks. I was sick and bitter and lonely when I first heard it and then it seemed as if the embodiment of youth—"

He broke off, suddenly and roughly reminded of the gulf of years that separated them. It had never pained him as it pained him in that moment, and it had never seemed plain to him that, at all costs, she must know the truth.

"It is perhaps as well we have never seen each other—"

He began falteringly, but he got no further. He listened, thinking he had heard a smothered exclamation.

"Did you call?" he asked. "Is there anything wrong?"

There was no answer.

"Miss Adelaide—Miss Adelaide!"

The silence appalled him. He sat up, and in a frenzy of alarm repeated—"Adelaide! Adelaide!"

Still no answer.

Then he pressed his finger on the bell till the ward echoed.

IV

Colonel Mowbray lay and stared into

the darkness. He did not know that his eyes were open. He had lost all consciousness of his own condition. As in a horrible nightmare, he seemed to have left himself behind and to be watching, helpless and wretched, a scene in which life and death fought out a last desperate battle.

He heard soft, hurried steps, low whispers; he saw a shaded light burning on the table, the doctor bending over the white bed, a pale face thrown back upon the pillow, all its young, tender beauty overcast by the growing shadow. She was dying. That was what they had told him. There had been a sudden relapse and it was possible that she would not live to see the sunrise.

The Colonel had said nothing. He lay there, his beetling brows drawn together, his lips compressed, his fingers twisted in the folds of the coverlet. The night hours had crept past like eternities, but he did not move. At one stroke all his powers seemed to have been paralyzed. His very mind refused its office. Time after time he had tried to think, to explain why he was suffering, why every nerve, every capability of feeling was drawn taut with a hitherto unknown agony. But he could not think, could not reason with himself. His brain had become a hollow space in which the same sounds were echoed with torturing repetition.

"She is dying—she is dying. I shall never hear her voice again!"

Further than that he could not go.

Towards two o'clock he heard a new movement. The doctor had spoken; the nurse answered. He could not hear what they said—a maddening veil seemed to hang between his ears and their words—but instinct told him that the crisis had come. It was as if a spell had been lifted from him. He raised his cramped hands and clasped them as he had not done since he was a child. His lips moved in an inaudible whisper.

"Oh God, be merciful!" he prayed. "Spare her—let her live!"

Then the spell bore down once more upon him, like a numbing cloud upon his senses, and he lay there, motionless, rigid, waiting.

The gray dawn broke through the curtained window. He did not see it; for him the darkness remained unaltered. A ray of light fell full into his open eyes but he did not flinch. Only when the nurse entered with his breakfast he turned his head and looked at her.

She understood his glance. She could not have mistaken it. It was full of a stern, relentless appeal for the truth.

"She is safe," she said. "She will do well now."

Colonel Mowbray nodded. For the first time he realized that the darkness had lifted and that it was day. But he did not speak. He turned on his side with his face to the wall and a single tear rolled down his cheek and lost itself in the gray mustache.

"Thank God!" he thought. "Oh, my little girl, thank God!"

It was a moment of rejoicing, of an almost unbearable happiness, a mere moment! Then something in his frozen, aching brain snapped, and as for the first time he knew that the sun had risen, so for the first time he knew the truth, for the first time saw straight into the mystery of his own heart. He knew now why he had suffered, why in that night he had walked through the Shadow of Death at the side of a woman he had never seen.

He buried his face in his pillow in the agony of that revelation.

"I am an old, broken man!" he cried to himself. "And I have dared to love her—I have dared to love her!"

Colonel Robert Mowbray stood by the window of the hospital waiting-room looking thoughtfully out on the busy street. In reality he saw nothing of the stream of life as it flowed past him. He was looking back through the vista of years—fifty years of duty well accomplished and of an unbroken loneliness. He had never known love. He had never even thought of it, being proud of his solitary independence. Now it had come to him. It had revealed to him a truth—that he had despised the highest consolation which life has to offer—but it had also come too late.

"A decent man does not try to bind a girl to him who is young enough, prob-

ably, to be his child," he argued. "It would be a mean, unfair thing. I care for her too much for that."

So he put love definitely out of his life and prepared to go back to his loneliness. He had not even said good-by to her. For a fortnight he had lingered in a private room in the hospital, making his plans for the future, yielding perhaps to the temptation of hearing of her progress towards health and strength. But he asked few questions about her and sent no messages.

"It is better so," he thought. "She will forget."

And now the day of departure had come.

The door opened. He thought it was the doctor for whom he was waiting, and turned. A lady stood in the doorway. He noticed that she was small, was dressed in black and heavily veiled, but she had no further interest for him, and after a curt bow he resumed his old attitude with his back towards her.

Nevertheless, her presence troubled him. He heard her go to the table and turn over the papers lying there. The noise irritated his overstrained nerves. He wanted to be gone—to be alone.

With an impatient movement he crossed the room and rang the bell.

"Tell Dr. Johns I am here," he ordered the servant who answered his summons. "I should like to say good-by at once."

"Yes, sir."

As the door closed Colonel Mowbray swung around on his heel. He had heard a sound which sent his pulses galloping—an exclamation in a voice he knew, whose accents had never ceased to haunt his memory.

He saw that the lady in black had risen and had turned towards him, one hand blindly outstretched.

Obeying a wild impulse in which every resolution, every thought of prudence was forgotten, he caught it in his own. He knew it as he had known the voice. It was white, beautifully shaped like that of a pure marble statue. He lifted it to his lips and kissed it with all the passion of his lost youth.

"Forgive me!" he said huskily. "For-

give—and forget. Think, if you like, that I am a mad old fool. Be pitiful and generous. I never meant to see you. I meant to go out of your fair young life. I never meant to darken it with my love—the love of an old man.”

“Oh hush!” she said trembling. “Don’t you understand? I thought you were young, too. Remember—I never even heard your name. I thought you were in the prime of life—and I loved you.”

Her voice broke and he covered his face with his hands. Remorse, bitter and pitiless, had added itself to the burden of her loss.

“Poor little girl!” he said. “I did not mean to deceive you. I let things drift. I felt so young in heart that I never thought—that it was too late. I hardly knew that I loved you—not till they told me you were dying. Then I knew. But I will go away. You will forget me. Another and younger man, more fit to be your comrade—”

“Hush! Hush!” she interrupted him again. “Don’t you understand? Will you never understand? You were mistaken from the beginning, though I did not know it. I, too, let things drift. You were just my friend, my dear unseen neighbor. And I was so lonely. But when you told me of the picture you had made of me—a young and lovely girl—then I knew that you had grown to be more than friend—that I loved you and—”

She pushed his hands desperately away, forcing him to look at her. The veil was thrown back and he saw her face.

It was indeed beautiful—as he had seen it in his dreams—the face of a sweet dear woman, but there were lines about the tender mouth and eyes, and the hair that was brushed smooth from the temples was gray.

“Oh, my dear, I am an old, old woman!” she sobbed wildly from his shoulder. “And it was that—that which nearly broke my heart!”

Leonora and Votes For Women

BY DOROTHEA DEAKIN

Author of "The House Hunters," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHN NEWTON HOWITT

IT was a wonderful meeting," said her mother, enthusiastically. "The hall was crowded, and she stood there, Leonora, a gallant, clear eyed slip of a girl, facing them all undauntedly, encouraging them, urging them, inspiring them—just as some day I hope you will urge and encourage and inspire the whole world."

"Yes, Mother," said Leonora, in an absent voice.

"The whole audience rose to its feet and shouted when she'd finished. She looked like a young saint standing there—a glorious young martyr. One could almost see the halo—"

"Did she wear a pretty frock, Mother?"

"Leonora!"

A shocked, disillusioned face turned to the young girl.

Leonora sighed.

"It's more important than you'd think," said she. "How did she do her hair?"

"Simply parted," said her mother indignantly. "She wore a plain little Empire frock of a delicate green color. She looked—"

"Like spring," suggested Leonora. "'A girl with the grace of spring,' the *Woman's Herald* said. I suppose the

young men were almost all convinced, before the end of the meeting, that women are born leaders of men," finished the girl.

"Leonora!"

Aunt Georgie, who was sitting by a little table eating sandwiches, smiled to herself at the mother's shocked tone. She herself left these meetings less exalted than hungry.

Leonora arose and crossed the room quickly, crouched down on the floor beside her mother, and laid her warm cheek on the delicate white hand. She adored her mother. So beautiful, so clever, so spiritual, so brave. She had actually been to prison for a month in the past winter, that lovely, delicate mother, for her cause.

"If you'd been there," said her mother sadly, "you'd have understood. You should have seen the money pouring in. I had only taken a few pounds—"

"Fortunately," Aunt Georgie murmured, with a wicked side-glance at her sister-in-law.

"But I threw my ruby bangle into the plate."

"It was a very pretty bangle."

Leonora regretfully kissed the white wrist it had once adorned. Then she got up quickly and went out of the French window to the terrace and leaned over the stone balustrade. The garden was very black in the shadows, but the lawn was white; the fish-pond a lake of silver.

A round yellow moon stared at her over the black branch of the cedar tree and a nightingale gurgled somewhere close by. Leonora's face was round and young and very sweet. Her eyes were large and of an exquisite blue, and there was a certain shy surprised quality in her smile which was very taking. She found a book lying by the seat, where she had been sitting before the others came in. She picked it up with a queer little glance. "Women and Economics," was its honorable title.

In the drawing-room Mrs. Ingestre talked to her sister-in-law in a low voice.

"What is the matter with Leonora?" she asked, sadly.

Aunt Georgie smiled.

"It's her name, I think," she said briskly. "I knew what would happen if you called her Leonora. It's all rubbish to say that the rose by any other name would smell as sweet. She'd been quite another creature if you'd called her 'Edith' or 'Ethel' or 'Maud.'"

"But nothing *has* happened, only she seems so strange and unresponsive. All these other young girls are wildly interested in the Movement. These young ardent creatures, fresh from school, are our most useful helpers. They delight in the difficulties of—"

"Exciting new game, perhaps?" Aunt Georgie suggested cynically.

Mrs. Ingestre rose in displeased silence.

Aunt Georgie poured more chocolate out of a silver pot.

"Leonora isn't in love, is she?" she asked, abruptly.

"Oh, no," said Leonora's mother, with a smile. "She never sees any men here. The men she meets in the Movement don't seem to interest her. She has a good deal to do and to learn before she thinks of marriage. She doesn't seem to attract young men and I'm not sorry to see it. She hasn't got that free, broad-minded, gallant bearing which makes the modern girl so charming."

"No?" said Aunt Georgie, reflectively. "Yet the other sort of girl had a way of pleasing, once? And so there's no young man? Well—of course, *you'd know*."

"Of course I should," said Mrs. Ingestre with dignity. "Leonora has never had any reason to keep secrets from me. The Modern Mother is a companion to her child. She keeps young with her—"

"I sometimes wonder if Leonora isn't a good deal older than her parent," said the aunt, thoughtfully. "But it's much too damp for her to stand out there moon-gazing. Come in, Leonora; come in, my dear. Bedtime!"

On fine days Leonora studied in the garden, and when she was alone she had her lunch brought out there, too. She was nearly always alone. Sometimes she used to weed a little instead of reading, but only surreptitiously, because mother would have thought it a waste of time. Sometimes old McCutcheon, the head



"It isn't my head that's wrong," said the gardener

gardener, used to give her little jobs of planting to do to please her. She loved gardening.

Her mother deplored the fact to her sister-in-law.

"Give her a pair of leather gloves an' let her garden," said that lady wisely. "She'll soon make her back ache. I know I should."

But Leonora's mother knew there was no time to waste. When Leonora stood up on the platform to be heckled, she must be ready for any questions. At present she would have burst into tears—or laughter, and fled in confusion if she'd been firmly taken in hand by an unsympathetic member of the audience.

So Leonora had her little table and her books and papers taken out to the Syringa Glade between the apple orchard and the rose-garden and she began her day's task. She was to write a little speech on "The Hearth or the Wide World," and she wrote a few sentences,

but when she got to "the narrowing influence of the fireside," she put down her pen to watch the under gardener at his work.

He was diligently picking dead blooms off the pansies.

"I say—Martins—"

"Yes, Miss—"

"Don't pick the buds off, too. I saw you pick two buds to one dead head."

Martins laughed ruefully at the little handful of purple and yellow trophies.

"I don't know what I'm doing half the time," he said, with a quick glance at her.

"I've noticed that," said Leonora frankly. "I've wondered sometimes if I ought not to speak to McCutcheon about you. Do you feel queer about your head—in your brain?"

"It isn't my head that's wrong," said the gardener with a rueful smile.

Leonora watched him reflectively, but I don't know what she was thinking.

Perhaps she was thinking that he was rather outspoken for an under-gardener. Yet she didn't rebuke him for it, for one of the first nice things her mother had taught her was to be charming to the servants.

"Don't tell McCutcheon," said the young man, straightening himself and pushing back his dark hair with his brown hand.

He had very black eyes, and his skin was brown and freckled. His clothes were gray and shabby, but he had taken off his coat and his blue print shirt sleeves were fresh and becoming.

"Don't you get tired of your everlasting books!" he asked, abruptly tilting back his straw hat.

Leonora sighed, and shut up a thick tome with a bang.

"I say—all those delphiniums in the perennial border want tying up. You ought to have done it yesterday. Let me do it. Give me some of that tying out of your pocket."

The gardener gave her a handful of the straw bass, and when she smiled her thanks, her eyes met his—the blue gaze was entangled hopelessly with the black gaze, and they stood quite silently for some seconds.

Then Leonora spoke quietly with her eyes on the ground.

"Mother wants me to have perfect peace for my studies. That's why she took this house. She don't want to know people. She hasn't returned any calls. Her life is so full, you see, of really important things—"

"And what is your life full of?" he asked in a low voice.

She flushed and looked up quickly, then dropped her eyes.

"I am preparing—I mean I am too young to take any active part yet. It—I don't think it's a very full life yet—"

"I could show you how to fill it," said the gardener, quietly.

Leonora sighed.

"I wish you would," said she.

He dropped his harvest of pansy heads.

"Do you—do you—oh!—"

"I mean," said Leonora quickly, opening her blue eyes very wide. "I

mean that I've always loved gardening. I'd rather—much rather plant out tender annuals—or even weed, than study economics. But mother says we must reserve our energies for the human plants. She says the human weeds want rooting up first."

"It's rather a big undertaking," the gardener remarked thoughtfully.

And Leonora went off to tie up the delphiniums.

Now, behind the syringas there was a path leading round to the kitchen-garden, and Aunt Georgie, who had suddenly changed her mind about going to town with her sister-in-law, had, as luck would have it, chosen that particular spot to plant her hammock chair and read her novel.

So it came about that at dinner that evening wise Aunt Georgie said, quite openly, that if *she* was the mistress of that house she should get rid of that idle under gardener.

"He seems an agreeable young man," said Mrs. Ingestre, absently. "I'm so busy now, Georgie, I don't want to be worried with trifles."

Leonora cast a quick look at her aunt. "He's not up to his work," said that lady, briskly. "Foreign extraction—you can see by his coloring. Don't trust him. Don't worry; I'll speak to McCutcheon."

"Oh, thank you," said Leonora's mother, gratefully. "One can always replace these people, of course."

Could they? Leonora's eyes hidden by dark lashes, were on her plate. What was behind all this? Easily replaced? Those black eyes; those long enchanted mornings in the garden?

When she slipped up to her room after dinner, leaving the others on the veranda, Aunt Georgie turned to her sister-in-law.

"I think Leonora must be a little lonely down here. Why not send her away for a change somewhere?"

"She's quite happy here," said the mother in troubled tones. "She's quite happy with her books. I can't get her to take an active part yet. She says she isn't ready; I don't understand her."

"She's an Early Victorian," said Aunt Georgie, promptly. "That's why. You're

a Modern. She ought to sit at a tambour frame."

"She embroiders beautifully," said Mrs. Ingestre, sadly. "She's quite content to spend *hours* at it!"

"She ought to make jam and cowslip wine."

"Leonora has always loved to go and mess about the kitchen."

"She ought to play the harp—"

"Oh, she *does*," Mrs. Ingestre smiled deprecatingly. "Her father insisted because she has such pretty round arms. *His* mother used to do it, and *her* arms were just like Leonora's."

"She wants a *duenna*," Aunt Georgie said brusquely.

But here Mrs. Ingestre rose with offended dignity.

"There I differ from you," said she proudly. "My child has always had perfect freedom, and always shall have. Thank God we are not Turks, to shut our girls up and spy upon them."

Aunt Georgie shrugged her shoulders brutally.

"Oh, well, if you believe in letting things rip, then by all means let them rip. It's no affair of mine. Do you want those notes copied out for to-morrow night?"

"Please, dear."

The next evening the two ladies dined in town, for the meeting was an early one and Mrs. Ingestre was to take the chair.

Leonora, rather pale and very quiet, dined alone on the terrace. Wuthers waited on her as usual. But once, when he had gone down for the *crème-de-pêches*, Rose, the parlormaid slipped in and laid a little note by her plate.

Leonora did not open it until she was alone, but I wonder what inherited instinct told her so truthfully exactly what it would contain?

They have sent me away. I don't understand you. I don't know how much you know or understand, but I must see you before I go.

Will you come into the rose-garden at nine o'clock?

M.

A little of the lost color came back to her cheeks as she read this, and a

light was born suddenly in those childish eyes.

Leonora had no appetite for the *crème-de-pêches* when Wuthers came back with it, and she looked anxiously at her tiny enameled watch. Nine o'clock—no, a quarter to. She ran to the great mirror at the end of the drawing-room and stared at the young figure in the pale, rose-colored muslin frock, at the shining eyes and brilliant cheeks. She never thought of getting a cloak, or putting a scarf over her head, although the dew was falling fast.

She ran out to the veranda and down the steps to the terrace below; then she stopped and waited impatiently till nine o'clock. She *must* be at least five minutes late. Who had taught Leonora that?

The gardner was waiting for her, of course. He was sitting on the iron seat in the corner of the little square rose-garden with his head hidden in his hands. He heard her light step when she came towards him under the pergola, and he rose slowly to come to meet her.

"I had to see you again," he said harshly.

Leonora looked at him. He wore the old gray suit and his black head was uncovered.

She met his eyes and shivered a little.

"I want to tell you the truth," said he. "I want to tell you why I have deceived you like this—"

"I should like you to tell me," said Leonora quietly.

She went and sat down.

He followed her and stood looking down at her.

"I saw you on the platform at that meeting," said he. "You were sitting behind your mother, looking down at a book—you had a white frock on and you looked tired and bored and—"

"Oh, I *was* bored," said Leonora drawing a deep breath.

"And then suddenly you looked up—"

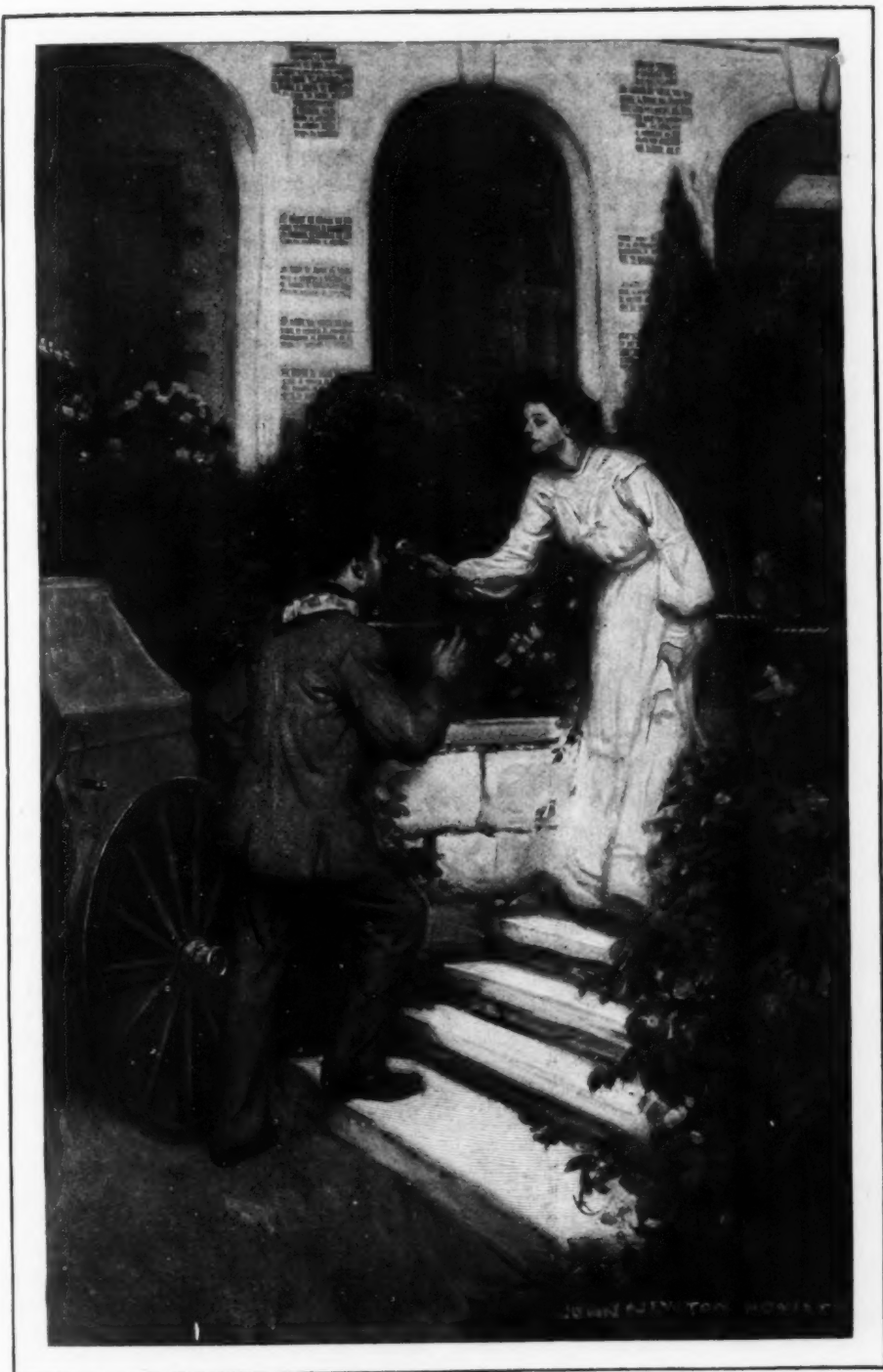
"Yes?" said Leonora.

"I was sitting in the second row near the end—"

"Were you?"

Oh, Leonora—Leonora!

"You know I was. You saw me. I've never seen such blue eyes as yours. I



Leonora picked a rose from a bush by the steps

was watching them all night. I went to that meeting to scoff, but I came away to—Oh, I know you understand. Your eyes found mine again and again—”

“You looked so strange and out of place,” said Leonora simply.

He sat down beside her.

“I did my best to get to know you. I tried to get an introduction to your mother, but she wouldn’t hear of it, because some one told her that I said I didn’t see why women should have a vote.”

“Why did you say that?” Leonora asked regretfully.

“I’m sincere, you see,” ruefully.

“Are you?” said Leonora with a laugh. He flushed.

“I mean I was. I said there would be a huge majority of women and we didn’t want the country governed by women—”

Leonora laughed. Where—oh where were her principles now?

“I found that you knew no one in this neighborhood. I was at my wits’ end. And then I thought of the old story of Dorothy Vernon and John Manners and I came disguised as a gardener.”

“You don’t make a very good gardener, Mr. Martinez.”

He started.

“Then you *do* know my name?”

“Yes.” Leonora smiled. “You dropped a card one day out of your coat-pocket. ‘Mr. Ramon Martinez,’ it said.”

“My father was Spanish,” said he, half apologizing for it. “We’ve still got the old place in Andalusia—tumbling down. I’m very poor—”

Leonora turned and looked at him. Who had taught Leonora that long, strange look? Martinez obeyed it—obeyed his own heart, too, and with a husky little laugh he came quite close to her and took her left hand in his. It was a cold little hand, too. He put his arm around her along the back of the seat and drew her head to his shoulder. Leonora lifted her lashes and looked at him again.

“Did you think I shouldn’t remember those unforgettable eyes?”

Then he kissed her and still Leonora didn’t speak.

“What are we to do?” he said. “I

love you—I must have you, my dear—my dear. Leonora—you don’t want to go in for this hateful business. You don’t want to work and speak and give up your life to—”

Then he found that Leonora was quietly crying.

“I told her,” she said, “I told her that I didn’t want a public life. I said I’d rather have a—a happy home—and she was so grieved. She’s always grieved, never angry. She said ‘Very well—if you think the Woman’s Sphere is the Home, you shall stay at home till you’re sick of it.’”

“And are you?”

“Yes.” In a low voice. “So, I’ve given in. I’m weak, you know. I’ve promised to work for the Movement. I was tired of it.”

“Wasn’t it because you were always alone, *chiquita*—dear?”

“I think it must have been.”

“Was it better after I came—”

“You know.” Leonora whispered it.

“You do love me then?”

The question was hardly necessary.

“I’m afraid so. Mother says I’m behind the times.”

“Thank God for it, then—”

“She says a frank, true companionship and community of tastes are necessary for a happy marriage. She says love alone isn’t enough. I—hardly understand. Is ours—only—love—”

“Do you want anything better, then?” he laughed softly. “Well—we’re both interested in gardening—”

“I don’t care,” said Leonora recklessly. “It’s enough for me. Oh—you’re going away—you’re going away—Oh when—when shall I see you again?”

Leonora’s name had indeed irretrievably influenced her character.

And the charming Mrs. Ingestre stood on a platform in her beautiful evening-dress, with an eager light in her exalted spiritual eyes, and begged her sister-women to give up everything in life they held most dear, and throw themselves heart and soul into the Great Work of the Regeneration of Women.

And in the rose garden under the round yellow eye of the summer moon, young Martinez told Leonora over and

over again that he loved her and that it was impossible for him to live without her. What she ought to have done as a modern girl was to have told him firmly that he must go and make money; that poverty kills love.

What she did do, benighted little creature, was to cling to him and say: "I love you—I love you—I can't give you up. Don't—don't let them make me give you up."

"No one can make you give me up," said Martinez sensibly.

"I'm so weak-willed," she murmured. "Aunt Georgie says it's because my name's Leonora. Do you think I should have fallen in love with you so quickly if my name had not been Leonora?"

"I'm glad your name is Leonora," said he with a happy laugh.

"I oughtn't to meet you secretly," said Leonora wistfully. "I'm honest, even if I am Early Victorian. Can't you go in ardently for Woman's Suffrage or something?"

"I'm honest, too," said Martinez gravely.

"I never thought of that," said Leonora naïvely.

Yet, weak as Leonora was, when they parted that night, she said it must be until she could meet him honestly. She said he must get to know her mother. What she ought to have done as a modern girl was to go straight in and have it out with her mother, and demand that her lover should be received at the house.

What she did, was to hug her secret to her foolish heart, cry herself to sleep over it, and dream of an early grave and a marble tomb hidden in white roses with a suitable inscription.

"Those whom the Gods love die young," said Leonora tragically, when she awoke with her absurd grief in the middle of the night.

Young Martinez, made of solider stuff, tried to get to know Mrs. Ingestre. In fact, he got an introduction to her and made himself extremely charming in his unscrupulous Spanish way, but that lovely lady, beloved and admired by so many, was blind to his dark graces and alluring ways. She was so deaf and

blind to everything but her work that it was impossible for him to make any impression on her unless he deliberately humbugged and played a part, and that a certain mulish, stiff-necked pride would not allow.

Aunt Georgie spoke of him at the dinner-table one night and then Leonora knew that her lover was taking steps.

"He's a handsome boy," said Mrs. Ingestre absently. "Did you leave those pamphlets in your room, Gebrgie? Yes, oh, quite handsome."

"Fine eyes," said Aunt Georgie.

"Oh quite. He has Spanish blood, too. That accounts for his archaic ideas about a woman's position. They say he has a title, too—if he cared to claim it—in Spain."

"I've heard of castles in those parts," said Aunt Georgie, and then the matter dropped.

Leonora lived on her heart for a month. He was not to write to her because she could not get her letters without her mother seeing them. She met him—once or twice—then had had to hide him at the sound of Aunt Georgie's voice, and after that she refused to meet him again.

She said she was weak, but I think Leonora was stronger than she knew.

Young Martinez was not so patient, and the spirit of romance was alive in his breast. He would have come openly to see her if she had allowed it, but she wouldn't hear of it. He could not come as a gardener after his dismissal. What was he to do?

The Spirit of Romance and Adventure and the traditions of old Spain showed him a way—showed him a troubadour singing under the barred windows of his beloved.

Leonora, sitting on the terrace with her tiresome books, longing for her lover, found her silence and solitude rudely broken by a loud and clanging barrel-organ on the path below. A little wicked faced monkey scrambled up the grassy slope and climbed over the stone balustrade to squat there in his scarlet coat with his thin brown tail hanging over, and offer her a scarlet cap.

"Isn't it a lovely organ, miss?"

The parlor-maid appeared at the window with Leonora's hot milk on a tray.

Leonora looked down at the dark-eyed foreign person smiling and sweeping low bows on the path below, and stared white-faced, startled—shocked—amused and very glad.

"Is it?" she said nervously. "What's he playing, Rose?"

"He's playing 'Love Me and the World is Mine,' Miss Leonora. Silly words them love songs have. Love him and the world is *his*. Not a word about *her*, mind you? Hard work and plenty of it—that's what she'll get. Oh them songs."

"I'll go down and give him something," said Leonora with a pink face.

The maid followed her with her eyes as she ran down the steps.

"Ah, *señorita*," she heard, "will you not give to me a rose—yes?"

Leonora picked a red rose from a bush by the foot of the steps.

"Like his cheek," said Rose, leaning over much interested.

The black-eyed organ-grinder stuck it behind his ear.

"Silly!" said Rose with scorn. "I've never seen a young man do nothing of that before."

"*Gracias, señorita*," said the organ-grinder, casting a regretful glance at the parlor-maid. "*Muy hermosa*—can't you send that girl in?"

Leonora, very red and confused, looked up.

"Rose—will you ask cook for some little hard biscuits and nuts for the monkey—And some lemonade for the—for his master?"

Rose disappeared.

"Don't touch me," Leonora said, hastily. "The house has a thousand eyes."

"But I must see you—I must tell you—We can't go on like this. Darling—"

"Oh—do take care," said poor Leonora. "Aunt Georgie will be in in a moment."

The unscrupulous one tilted his hat well over his eyes, bold with confidence now.

"To-night," said he quickly. "In the rose-garden again, at nine. Oh, you

must come. You must come. I've got something to tell you. There's that—that confounded girl!"

He turned the handle of the organ vigorously, and to the strains of "When the Sunset Turns the Ocean's Blue to Gold," Leonora said she would come—just this once, but never again.

She went—once—again—again, again. She met him there every evening for a week, and every evening he made the most charming love to her; he cajoled, persuaded, kissed her into a promise—revealed to her the wonderful, daring, delightful scheme. Friday night he told her everything finally, but on Saturday morning something was forgotten. The organ came again, the little wicked brown monkey jumped into her arms and chattered and scolded her, and under and cover of a horrible tune called "Sea-weed," Leonora heard that she must be there on Sunday evening again without fail.

"I can't come on Sunday—Oh, monkey, go on chattering. They will be at home all day. We should be caught."

"No, we shouldn't. You must slip out while they are having their coffee on the veranda."

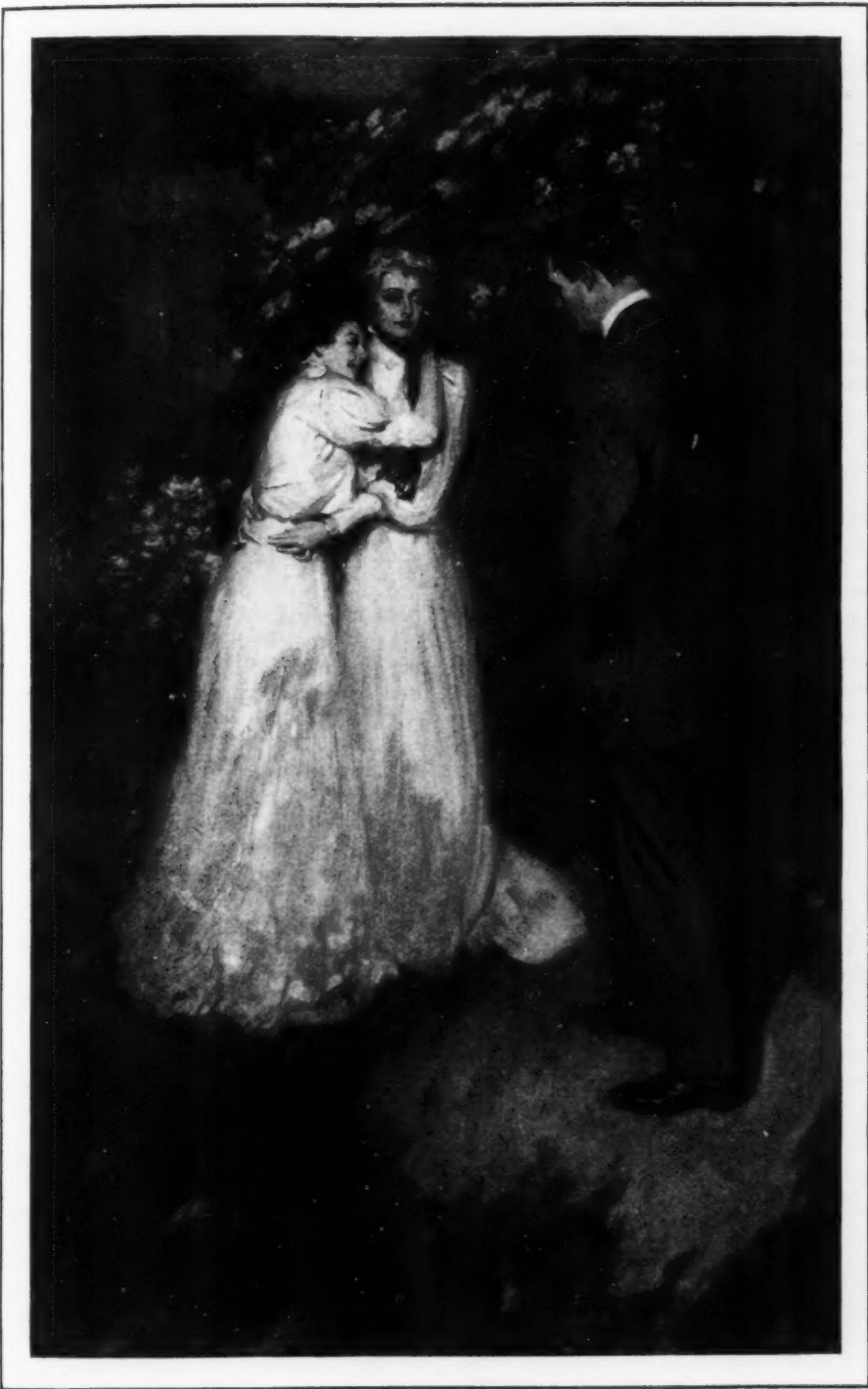
Sunday was an awful day. Leonora clung to her mother and never let her out of her sight, pressing little attentions and services of love upon her. And at nine o'clock she vanished.

At half-past nine, Mrs. Ingestre rose from her chair by the balustrade and leaned over looking at the white garden, black shadowed by the cedars and cypresses.

"Georgie—one forgets sometimes how exquisite a garden can look in the moonlight. I'm going down to Leonora. I sometimes think that child must be rather lonely—One gets so deeply engrossed—"

"Yes," said Aunt Georgie, gruffly, "one does."

Leonora's mother walked slowly down the broad path under the terrace, to the Italian garden: through that—finding no Leonora there—to the pergola which led to the rose-garden. The entrance to the little garden was almost choked by the climbing orange rose which covered



"I can't—Oh, Mother, I can't give him up",

the pergola, and she stopped in surprise at the low murmuring voice which broke softly upon her listening ear.

Leonora's? And not alone?

Leonora's voice was very low and half broken by sobs, but she was so near that it was possible to catch most of what she was saying.

"I'll read the letter to you if you like," she said, sorrowfully.

"What letter?" said the man's voice.

"The letter to poor Mother."

Mrs. Ingestre started. Her confused sense that this eaves-dropping was not fair had almost thrust her from her hiding-place. But this letter to her? If it was to her she would have a right to hear it now.

She kept very still. The rustling she made might have been the rustling of the summer wind amongst the roses.

A paper crackled. Leonora, in a voice interspersed with sobs, began to read:

"MY DARLING MOTHER—"

"She really is my darling mother, Ramon. You know that, don't you?"

"MY DARLING MOTHER:

"It breaks my heart to leave you like this, but I can't—I can't give him up. We can't live without each other. We've been trying hard—"

"I haven't," said Martinez, with a soft little laugh. "I never meant to—"

Leonora went on.

"I didn't see him for a whole month. I know you disapproved of his principles and opinions, and I know you'll scorn and despise me when I tell you that I *quite quite* agree with him that a woman's sphere is the home. I know we're the downtrodden sex, but I don't believe he means to tread on me—"

"Not yet," said Martinez, calmly.

So when he came disguised first as a gardener and then as a monkey—

"Leonora!"

"Disguised with a monkey and a barrel-organ, playing 'Love Me and the World is Mine,' with a handle, I couldn't hold out any longer. We are going to be married by special license to-morrow, and you will find the organ and the monkey in the little tool shed at the end of the orchard. They are only hired, so please return them. We are going to Spain, to Ramon's place

there. He's poor, but I don't care. He says one can live on almost nothing there. I should like to live on oranges and tortillas and things with *him*. Oh, Mother, darling, do forgive me. It isn't because I love you too little, it's because I love him too much."

Mrs. Ingestre broke into a sudden little laugh and pushed back the curtain of green which hid her from the lovers. In her white dress, with the black lace over her fair hair, the pretty pale mother looked almost as young as her child.

"Mother!"

Leonora started and sprang to her feet.

Martinez rose, too, with a rueful little smile, half-ashamed—half-relieved, I believe.

What Leonora ought to have done as a Modern girl was to have stayed bravely by her lover and firmly demanded her right to live her life in her own way.

Hopeless to the last, what she did, poor child of a bygone age, was to run up to her mother with a little sob, put her warm young arms around her neck and cry piteously.

"I can't—Oh, Mother, I can't give him up."

"Have I asked you to give him up, Leonora?" Mrs. Ingestre said quietly.

Leonora startled, stared at her.

"But—you meant me to be so advanced. You meant me to speak at meetings—You had everything all cut and dried and planned out. You are wrapped up in the Movement. You love it. It's your life. You would never have let me marry anyone who had different—"

"Oh—Leonora—"

Mrs. Ingestre held the girl in her arms and suddenly kissed her passionately. "First of all, I love my little girl—" said she.

And Leonora, looking up bewildered, saw that her mother's eyes were wet.

Martinez stood waiting—but he did not speak. What, indeed, could he say?

"You belong to another age," the mother said, in a voice half-sorrowful, half-amused to Martinez, still holding the girl in her arms.

"Oh, I see that it is all too true. Leonora will never be a Modern girl. She belongs to an age of secrecy, of stern par-

ents—of young romance, when girls were princesses locked up in enchanted towers."

Leonora clung to her, laughing almost hysterically.

Martinez came a little nearer.

"If we had known," he said quickly, "that you wouldn't have—minded—that you would have taken it like this—but we—I'm afraid we've behaved rather—"

Leonora put out a little comforting hand to him without looking up.

"Ah, Mr. Martinez," said her mother slowly, "you mustn't run away with her to-morrow. You must send away the coach and postillions and wait for the

orange blossoms. Come in, my dear—my foolish, dear little girl. Come with us, Mr. Martinez! You, too, are behind the age, you know. You belong to a world of disguises and secret meetings; a world of troubadours, sighing and playing beneath the castle windows. But you must wait a little while for your enchanted princess, I am afraid. You can't live on Love's Young Dream and—oranges—even in—"

"Even in what?" said Leonora, with one hand clinging to her lover, the other around her mother's neck.

"Even in a Castle in Spain," said Mrs. Ingestre.

The Grip of Time

BY EDWARD B. WATERWORTH

IN spite of our prohibitive order," remarked President Jessup of the State University, as he sat in the library of his home conferring with the Dean, "I am convinced the secret societies are still conducting their initiations among the students."

Professor Wernham, the Dean, nodded in regretful acquiescence.

"The matron told me," he remarked with disapproval, "that she is certain the young ladies also have a sorority in active operation."

"She made the same report to me, after making a round of the girls' dormitories," said the President. "She noticed one of the inmates bore marks on her—er—lower limb that could only have come from that unfortunate practice of imprinting the initial letters of a society upon a new candidate with silver nitrate."

"I thought that foolish custom was confined to the men!" exclaimed the Dean with some curiosity.

"Apparently not," responded the President, sadly. "Moreover, the young lady in question showed anything but a proper spirit in the matter. When the matron questioned her, she merely laughed and said the marks were a secret.

When reproved for allowing such disfigurement, the girl's reply was altogether frivolous. I believe she said she was in the habit of wearing clothing over her—er—extremities—when in public."

"And yet," said the Dean, in a spirit of mild charity, after both had smoked for a time in silence, "we took a great interest in our own fraternity years ago—Harry."

"Yes—James," replied the President, with the stiffness of the unaccustomed address, yet unbending somewhat. "Yes, we did. We surely would have resented any interference with the society. That is," he hastily amended, "we would not have done so if there had been any good cause for action by the college authorities."

"Our initiations were much more conservative than those of late years seem to be," objected the Dean.

"Quite so," agreed the President. "And that is why I intend to issue a notice placing all students upon their honor not to join any such organization. Some misguided spirits among the classmen seem to think the rule abolishing Greek letter societies was an immense joke."

"We certainly find most disrespectful utterances concerning it in the college

paper," said Dean Wernham, with some heat.

"Yes," agreed the President, suppressing a smile, as he thought of a cartoon of the previous week in which the Dean was the central and most undignified figure, "but the honor clause has usually proven effective."

"Returning to the initiation," began the Dean, in pained criticism, "a case occurred last year wherein one of the young men—a most excellent student who boarded at my house—had a new suit of clothes completely ruined. You know the trunk slide at the opera-house?"

"I certainly know nothing of such a resort," coldly answered the President, who was also a deacon.

"Of course, not from experience," hastily added the Dean, in apologetic tones, "but I thought you might have heard of it. It seems that the stage-door leading from the auditorium over the drug store is connected with the alley by a slide, down which the paraphernalia of theatrical companies can be shoved. This slide is generally kept greased—at least, so I deducted upon seeing young Melbourne when he returned from his initiation last year."

"What had the opera-house slide to do with it?" asked the President in surprise.

"It seems," replied the Dean, "that the fraternity members, regardless of his garments, conducted him to the top of the slide several times and shot him into a blanket below. His clothes were completely ruined. But he seemed to disregard this needless destruction, in view of the fact that he could wear an Alpha Beta pin."

"I fail to see where that is a cause for rejoicing," commented the President, with a touch of his old satire. For he had been initiated, years before, into the Sigma Zeta order.

"Nor do I understand it," agreed the Dean, who had once also proudly worn the Sigma Zeta badge.

"If they confined damage to their own belongings, less criticism would arise," continued the President after a short pause, "but considerable sentiment was occasioned by the actions of the fraterni-

ties last year. It seems that one society—which one I was unable to learn—enrolled six members at the same time. One of the absurd demands made upon these candidates was that they should, in some fashion, carry a cow and Vose Samuel's old mule into the organ loft of the Baptist Church, Saturday evening. When the janitor opened the doors for Sabbath School the next morning, he could not remove the animals in time for services and the session had to be postponed. As a member of the congregation, I came in for much undeserved censure."

"I recall that episode," said the Dean, struggling with a smile.

"They also," proceeded the President with some malice, as he noted the other's expression, "hung crêpe on the Methodist Church door and posted both on the church fence and at the postoffice that, on account of the illness of the Reverend Doctor Meisenberg and the death of a prominent member of the congregation, there would be no services that day."

"That was an outrage amounting to sacrilege," angrily exclaimed the Dean, who was a member of the church in question. "We had invited a noted missionary to speak, and but a handful was present."

"There is also the lack of dignity in some of their methods to be considered," continued the President. "I am a great friend, as you know, of Fred Wayne's father. Fred was a most excellent mathematician last year—so much so, that I decided to award him the junior prize. I wrote his father asking him to drop down and surprise his son, knowing that Fred had no idea he would receive the medal on class day. I met Mr. Wayne personally at the depot, just before Commencement, and it seems Fred was initiated at the same time. The first glimpse his father and I caught of the young man was when we reached Main Street, where we saw him rolling a peanut down the thoroughfare with a toothpick. It seems that this idea was the final step in his admission to some fraternity. It was a most painful sight, as the college band was following him, playing popular airs."

"There are other actions of the sort still more ridiculous, such as bringing

disorder into classes. One society insisted, lasted year, upon its pledged candidates attending either in dressing-gowns or dress-suits. It was not until several were suspended that the practice was discontinued."

"I recently objected," broke in the Dean, "to having a party serenade my daughter after one of their nonsensical meetings. They brought with them a candidate who was compelled to impersonate a monkey and to crouch in a corner by the sofa. One of his companions held him by a chain and bore an organ. Sophia seemed to find something laughable in the occasion, although she had never seen the young man before and was allowed to address him only as 'Monk!'"

"In my day, I would never have consented to such humiliation before a young lady," said the President, haughtily.

"Nor I," agreed the Dean. "And yet," he added, as his voice grew thoughtful and he gazed unseeing into the fire, "we had great times in the old days, Harry."

"Yes, James," said the President softly, also looking dreamily at the flames, as the memory of years long passed returned to him, "Yes, yes. There was a bond in the fraternity then that we felt. Do you remember that last night before we went to the war—soon before Shiloh? How the bonfires were lit on the old campus out here and how many of the boys in the Student Volunteers were of our order? We were proud of them—prouder I recall than I had ever been before. We left a lot of them behind us, but there was not one that we could not have taken even more pride in, if he had been able to come back with those that were left."

"It was in the old barn back there—father's barn in those days—that we held the initiations of all those who have gone ahead of us. I suppose," he added abruptly, in a changed tone, "that it would be available for one of the ceremonies of our times."

"Let's go out and take a look at the old place," suggested the Dean, rising suddenly. "I have never been inside the

barn since the reunion there in 1869, when so many of the old faces were missing."

The President nodded silently, and picking up the lamp led the way through the rear door of the house, across the broad yard and toward the ancient brick structure which rose before them in the still fall air. Inside could be heard the rustling of hay, and, as the two pushed open the wide doors and entered, the placid faces of the family horse and cow turned toward them in mute interrogation, as the animals ceased their munching to gaze at the intruders.

"Mind the ladder," cautioned the President, as he picked his unaccustomed way laboriously upward; "we're neither of us as spry as we were when we came this way last time."

"It was nothing for us then," remarked the Dean, clumsily placing one foot beside the other as he rose from rung to rung. "We carried some pretty heavy candidates up between us. It didn't seem steep, at that, in those days. It certainly did not trouble you as much as it does now."

"I am carrying a lamp, you see," responded the President curtly, somewhat on the defensive.

Reaching the top, he rather ostentatiously aided the Dean to rise over the final step. Then, holding the lamp above his head, he gazed about him. The dusty interior was like that of many another structure of its kind, but the two glanced around with interest, pointing to spot after spot whereon some event of note in the olden days had occurred.

"There's the opening the hay used to be thrown down," said the Dean, pointing to a square orifice in one corner. "Do you remember how we used to drop a man to the floor below? It generally scared the breath out of him."

"Yes," responded the President, nodding to the cobwebby rafters, "and there is the old pulley on which we used to swing a newcomer."

"Why, here's the old transparency in the corner," cried the Dean. "It evidently has never been disturbed."

The President stepped to a long frame, covered with dingy paper, which

stood against the wall, and placed the lamp on a small shelf behind it. The light, shining through the dust and grime of years, revealed the outlines of a skeleton with a great repulsive leer painted in lurid colors on the front.

"That startled many a man when we suddenly unbandaged his eyes," laughed the Dean. "Do you remember that they were always at a loss to realize where they were—particularly after we hoisted them up from outside? Where is that old door?"

"Be careful or you'll slip down one of those holes in the floor," cautioned the other, fumbling in the gloom along the low side wall. "Ah, here we are."

A moment of wrenching at the long disused catch was awarded by a sudden creak, as the bolt slid back and a small door, after a moment of resistance, opened outwards to the alley in the rear.

"They used to haul the horse-feed up on this beam," remarked the President, putting his hand above his head; "and do you recall how we used to march new men around town, bringing them over the lot back here and then hoisting them up the same way? Why—what's that?"

Just across the alley was a lot, bearing a heavy crop of weeds and having in its center the ruins of a long disused arbor. In this structure, plainly visible in the October moonlight, could be seen a blindfolded figure with hands tied behind its back seated on an old bench.

Attitude, hour, and appearance were unmistakable. It was a candidate for some secret order, left for the time by those who had him in charge, as part of his initiation. And this in spite of the prohibitive order!

The two officers of the faculty looked at each other with faces suddenly grown stern. Such open defiance of a college rule brought them from their reminiscences to the present—and to their official capacities. With one accord they descended the ladder, quickly opened the rear door of the barn and hurried toward the arbor.

The hooded figure rose as they approached. The Dean was almost on the point of uttering a chuckle, as old mem-

ories once more returned to him, when he recalled the circumstances and coughed portentously instead.

With dignified *mein*, the President stepped forward, laid his hand upon the shoulder of the boy and cleared his throat to speak. Then, at an exclamation from the Dean, he paused in wondering hesitation. On the lapel of the candidate's coat gleamed the pledge of his own old fraternity—the Sigma Zeta!

For a moment the old men stood staring at each other. Memory of another night when he himself had stood in that same arbor, then in its days of use, rose in the mind of the Dean. Recollections of the nervous fashion in which he had guarded rear portions of his anatomy at his own initiation, half a century before, surged in the mind of the President. Each could appreciate the feeling of the boy before them, and in the Dean's eyes shone a look of regret and his lips half opened in an unspoken query. But the President shook his head. This infraction of his edict could not be overlooked.

Again he began to speak and the boy started nervously.

The Dean chuckled audibly.

"Wait!" he half breathed.

President Jessup looked at him reprovingly, yet hesitated. Once more he essayed to speak, again paused and again looked at the Dean. In spite of himself he smiled softly.

The next instant, each firmly grasping an arm of the candidate, they were hurrying him toward the barn, the door of which presently closed softly behind them.

It was a dismayed assemblage that gathered in the boarding-house occupied entirely by members of the Sigma Zeta fraternity an hour later. Two frantic and excited scouts had returned with a tale of how they had conducted their charge about town, how they had heard pedestrians before and behind them on the walks, how they had concealed the candidate in an arbor, while keeping watch and how, upon their return, he had disappeared.

In amazed silence they gazed at one

another. Vituperation had been heaped upon the conductors, until there was no longer gratification in that course.

"It's some of those guys from the dormitory," groaned the chairman. "They must have been following you around town all the time. They're sore on frats and will think it's a great joke to lead him up before all those Barbs, have a good time with him, and turn him loose. He'll think it a part of the regular ceremony."

"But wont they have the laugh on us to-morrow?" moaned the secretary.

Thereupon ways and means were at once proposed and discussed at length, of getting back at the barbarians who had so far forgotten their low plane in the undergraduate life of the institution as to interfere in the operation of their lofty superiors. A ducking would be too good for them; the town-pump could still be depended upon. It had served its secondary purpose in the past and might very well be resorted to again. Or incarceration in the "haunted house," two miles from town! That proposal met with loud applause. The notorious timidity of "barbs" made it all the more desirable.

A loud knock and the shuffling of feet on the porch suddenly ended the discussion. For one moment the members gazed at each other, then, as if by one accord, they leaped toward the door. Before them, still blindfolded and much the worse for wear, was their missing candidate. To his breast was pinned a sheet of paper on which was scrawled:

"Latest sub-rosa member of Sigma Zeta."

While three "brothers" dashed through the yard in a vain attempt to discover the perpetrators, others, forgetful of the ritual, tore the bandage from the eyes of the astonished Morrison and excitedly demanded an explanation. The candidate could only recount a tale, however, which brought forth expressions of wild

incredulity, until his earnestness convinced his hearers of its truth.

He told how he had been hoisted through space to a dark chamber where a frightful image of death was suddenly flashed before him, after he had been swung violently through the air. He told how he had been thrown from some height upon a pile of hay or straw, which broke his fall; of riding an animal he presumed to be a goat, and of the reading of an impressive charge to him by some person who intoned the words with priestly solemnity.

Cautious questioning and finally specific examination revealed the fact that it was the ritual of their own fraternity he had heard, that he knew the grip, the pass-word, and the secret signs of the order, and that, so far as routine was concerned, he had been properly put through a regulation initiation.

"It's some of those blamed alumni playing their tricks," snorted the chairman. "They've always wanted to get even because we wont let them take part in the initiations. It's a shame to cut us out of it this way. Unless," he added hopefully, "to make things entirely regular, Brother Morrison would prefer to be initiated over again."

But Brother Morrison, conscious of the hardness of the chair on which he was seated, expressed himself with firmness as not in favor of any such course.

The Dean, somewhat disheveled but with a smile illuminating his face, sat smoking thoughtfully in the President's library. The President, leaning against the mantel, stood for a time in silence gazing down at the dying embers of the fire.

"Do you know," he said finally and with thoughtful precision, "I have been thinking the matter over and have decided to rescind my order which forbade Greek letter societies in the university."

The Singer in the Shadow

BY VANDERHEYDEN FYLES

ILLUSTRATED BY H. J. MOWAT

I CANNOT offer any reason for having been at the Nickelodeon Palace at all, certainly of all nights to have been there that night! Of course, if I were my friend Barton, I probably would not search for a reason; simply let it pass that naturally I was in the blazing building—just as I might be expected at the particular corner of Broadway and Times Square, where the taxicab was crushed between the north and south bound cable-cars; or strolling by chance through the rotunda of the famous old St. Charles when the distinguished senator fired three shots into a passing editor whose political views he did not share; or carelessly flicking the ashes from my cigaret against the massive statue at the foot of Victoria Street at the very moment when Kingston felt the first shock of the quake that later shook it into ruins. I might have been a any of those places at any of those times; but it just happens that I was not. I might not have been in Denver that night in July; but it just happens that I was.

I had caught the notion of stopping off in Denver on my way to San Francisco to look up a chap I had chummed with, rather, at Cambridge. However, as we had not seen each other since we had started out into the world six years before—with diplomas in our hands and confidence in our hearts—had, in fact, drifted in totally different directions, it was no crushing blow when I found that he was not in town; had simply gone to Colorado Springs for the polo season. Truth to tell, I felt his absence less keenly than my own presence in a city where I knew no one, where I was forcibly stalled for the night instead of steaming on my way through to the coast.

However, I realize that a necessary

night in Denver still hardly explains or justifies a visit to a little moving-picture theatre, the least promising and most remote that I came on in my long, aimless walk. No: all said and done, Barton's way is best. Simply accept it that the place in which I finally sat to rest my tired legs was the Nickelodeon Palace, and make as much of it or as little as you like.

The little wooden structure, wedged in between two brick office buildings of considerable size, was so flimsy that one instinctively lightened one's trend on entering it, lest the whole affair collapse in a heap. Its white and gilded frontage reached a full half-story higher than itself and was ornate with vaguely Renaissance effects. The stuffy auditorium was rather long and very narrow. Yet, small as it was, it was too large for its audience. There were few women: not more than six or seven, I should say. There probably were twenty men and boys, with, for the most part derbys tilted back on their heads and cigarets hanging from between discolored lips. In all, a scant assortment, I must admit, for the most easily satisfied amateur student of odd types, of "atmospheres," of unfamiliar points of view.

But few as my fellow auditors were, I could not distinguish them at first. On entering I found the hall darkened for a long series of farcical adventures shown in moving-pictures. It was a peculiarly infantile and stupid exhibition, not at all improper but simply a puerile potpourri of childish clowning. Yet it was this very affair that excited my curiosity as to what type I should find the accompanying pianist to be when the lights went up. It was not so much the rhythm, lilt, variety of his touch: such qualities, it

seems to me, are often found in odd places of this and less harmless sorts. Nor was what struck me most his expressiveness—humor, melancholy, dash, authority, sentiment—as he ambled through the changing airs. It was the airs themselves. It pulled me up a bit to hear snatches of the lighter Tschai-kowsky, of Offenbach, of Nicolai, leaping out from amongst the cheap waltzes and ragtime tinkle of the day. And each was applied with such unaffected knowledge, such quaint aptness, such spontaneously playful humor, heightening the crude comedy and sharpening points for people too dull to suspect.

When we had reached the end of a long series of pictures illustrating a tramp's robbery of a motor-car and the hot pursuit of him, and the lights were thrown on, I must admit that the pianist disappointed me. I do not know quite what sort of man I expected to see, but I am sure I hardly looked to find a type but little removed from the men and boys about me. As with most of them, a somewhat battered derby was tilted back on his head and a dead cigaret hung from between his lips. The lips were not so yellow, the tawdry clothes were clean if woefully shabby and unkempt. But looking less superficially I saw that the man was young, was well built, was, indeed, still very handsome. I say "still," because so it was that he struck me.

My view was stopped by the darkening of the auditorium and the first notes of a peculiarly banal ballad. The title of the sentimental trash was thrown on the screen. A singer appeared, but she did not come into the square of light. She took her place at one side, singing from the darkness the words which were illustrated by the highly colored pictures. Her vocalism excited in me no regret that I could only dimly trace her form through the black shadows. Her voice was as colorless, as utterly devoid of quality, humanity, or depth, as the song she sang. After the second verse she asked the audience to join in the chorus. The words of it were thrown on the screen, encircled by a wreath of deep pink roses and bright blue and yellow ribbons.

Before the second line had been sung the crash came. The machine, at the rear of the room, had toppled over. There was no other light. In an instant the cramped hall was dense with smoke. No one seemed to know quite what to do. There appeared to be no man in authority. The blackness of the smoke had thrown the people into panic. I leaped on a chair. I tried to quiet them. I groped my way to where the pianist would be.

"Here you," I said. "You know where the doors are. Open them. I'll keep some order here."

I did. It was not so easy, though. But when the two doors at the entrance, inadequately narrow as they were, had been flung open, there was less alarm. They let in a little light and air. The people made for them. There were few enough that there was slight danger of crowding or confusion. In a few moments the place seemed cleared. But the currents of air were fanning the smoldering fire into flames.

I turned to go. I wanted very much to get out. I am not a bit of a hero, and I have no desire to be one. I paused only to make sure that everyone was gone.

I called.

One voice answered.

It was the singer's.

She seemed to be at my elbow.

I grasped her arm, but she drew back.

"Not that way," she said. "This window."

Glancing again, I saw that that exit would be hazardous, impossible. Flames raged about the two doorways.

Suddenly she seized a heavy chair. She lifted it, swung it, hurled it.

I heard glass crash.

I think I must have been a bit suffocated, for I can remember only very vaguely following her to the shattered window, boosting it high up and then crawling through it after her. After that I remember nothing clearly until I heard her speak, and, looking about, I saw that she and I were sitting alone in a dark alley.

"There are the engines now," she was saying.

I heard the great clanging bells, but



A singer took her place at one side

the wagons were yet too far away to hear the clattering of the horses or the crunching of the heavy wheels.

Suddenly I heard a boy cry:

"Why, look—she's there!"

In a moment several others—men, women, boys—ran to the head of the alley. Evidently they had been watching the theatre burn.

Three or four gasped at the sight of the singer.

Then a woman shrieked:

"Why, she's out all right."

My companion was more alert than I. She jumped up.

"What do you mean?" she said.

"He thought you were still in there. We couldn't hold him. He's gone back."

"He? Who? Wilton?"

"Don't know his name. The piano thumper."

She did not pause a moment. She dashed out of the alley. I saw what she intended. I followed. She had reached the blazing doorway when I caught up with her. Simultaneously we entered the burning building just as the high wooden frontage tottered, swayed, and crashed forward to the ground.

Having had the injured young man put to bed in my room, I had had the hotel people give me another in which to bathe, to redress, to buck up generally. The singer had held the boy in her arms in the ambulance. She and the doctor were still with him. I had sent for a nurse.

When I went back to my rooms I felt as fresh and fit as if it were a May morning. It seemed preposterous that less than two hours ago I had been climbing through a red hot window, and had been hazy, half-unconscious, even in the open air. It made me feel rather ridiculous to recall having, later, been pulled from a sizzling building by three husky firemen.

Reaching my apartment I found the doctor ready to go, waiting, in fact, only to report to me. The boy was in no danger. He had, though, some bad burns, and was delirious. But a little good care and some rest would bring him around. The nurse had arrived; was with him. I thanked the doctor, arranged that he should attend him, that the bills should come to me; and said good-night.

I did not intrude in the sick room, had, indeed, been in the outer room of my apartment only a few moments when the door from the other was opened softly, the singer emerged, and quietly closed it behind her.

"Your arm?" I said, coming forward "Is it badly burned?"

"Only very, very slightly," she replied, quietly. "The doctor dressed it—it really wasn't necessary. You've done so much, so much for both of us. How am I ever going to thank you?"

I started to protest something conventional, something quite banal enough, I warrant.

But with it I saw her face.

It took me aback. It had not occurred to me that through everything this was really the first view I had gotten of the singer in the shadow. The difference in her voice should have prepared me: its softness, the refinement of its tones, her unaffected taste in the choice of words. Her clothes were tattered, scorched, inadequately restored to as presentable state as possible. But I was startled by the beauty of her face. Perhaps it was not quite beauty. Its pallor might well have been due to her last few hours; but there were lines; the cheeks were hollow, the face was far too thin. I fancy it was the soft brown hair, the expression of her gray eyes, the delicacy of her mouth, that gave me the idea of beauty.

"I'm going," she said. "The nurse is with him. I'll come back in the morning, if I may."

"Of course," I replied. "But now—you should rest, eat something. I'm sure,"

I laughed off, "that supper is quite the correct thing after an evening at a burning theatre."

She smiled. But she started as if instinctively to refuse. She hesitated.

"But I couldn't in these tatters," she finally wound up lamely.

"Surely, up here."

I did not let her vague objections prevail. Clearly food would brace her. I must confess, though, that it struck me even then that supper with her would hardly be a quite self-sacrificing kindness.

The ordering made something for us to talk about. But I confess that the imminent need of a less impersonal topic to go on with held some terrors for me. The ambiguity of her position; the



A dead cigaret hung from between his lips

doubt as to her relation to the young man whose anxiety to rescue her was no less prompt and heroic than hers to save him; the incongruity of her personality and her occupation, her cheap singing and her charming speech, her manner and the surroundings I had found her in; all these seemed to make simple conversation as dangerous to steer as a ship among the shoals.

But when supper had been brought, when even the first few sips of *consommé* had carried some color to her face, I found myself quite forgetting conversational perils, quite careless of the injured man and the nurse in the inner room.

"I can't get over the idea that I've seen you before," was, in fact, the imprudent extreme at which I early found myself.

"You've had time—these last busy hours," she laughed.

But I hardly could help but see that the line of chatter was unpleasant to her. It pulled me up.

"You must not worry," I veered off. "He'll come out all right. The doctor is positive."

"I'm so glad. Poor Wilton."

But she must have read my expression.

She laughed. It was not the constrained laughter of a few minutes earlier. It was simple, frank, girlish, rippling.

"How funny," she said.

"What?"

"Why—what you're trying to figure out."

She endeavored to occupy herself quite sedately with her *filet*.

"But it's horrid of me to laugh," she finally said. "And at anyone who has done so much."

There was no lack of sincerity in her tone, but the amused twinkle still lurked about her eyes.

"I should explain," she went on. "He's a dear, nice boy. He's been the staunchest possible friend. That's all. I've known him for years and years."

"It couldn't have been so many years," I said, looking at the flush and verve her prettiness had taken on.

"Please don't. Don't be disappointing.

You've given me such a splendid sense of good comradeship. And I'd almost forgotten that such things were."

"Very well," I returned. "Then you've known him just as many years as you like."

"That's exactly six. He was seventeen: I was twenty. We were in the chorus together—still, at that time, I would have been grossly insulted to have had my two-line rôle called the chorus."

"In New York?"

"Nearly two seasons. It was a record run. 'Flowerland.'"

"In the sextet? Then, that's where I saw you."

"Yes." She paused a moment. "It's a sort of relief, comfort, luxury, letting someone see me, recall me—for one evening."

"You're Ray Martin, then," I put in.

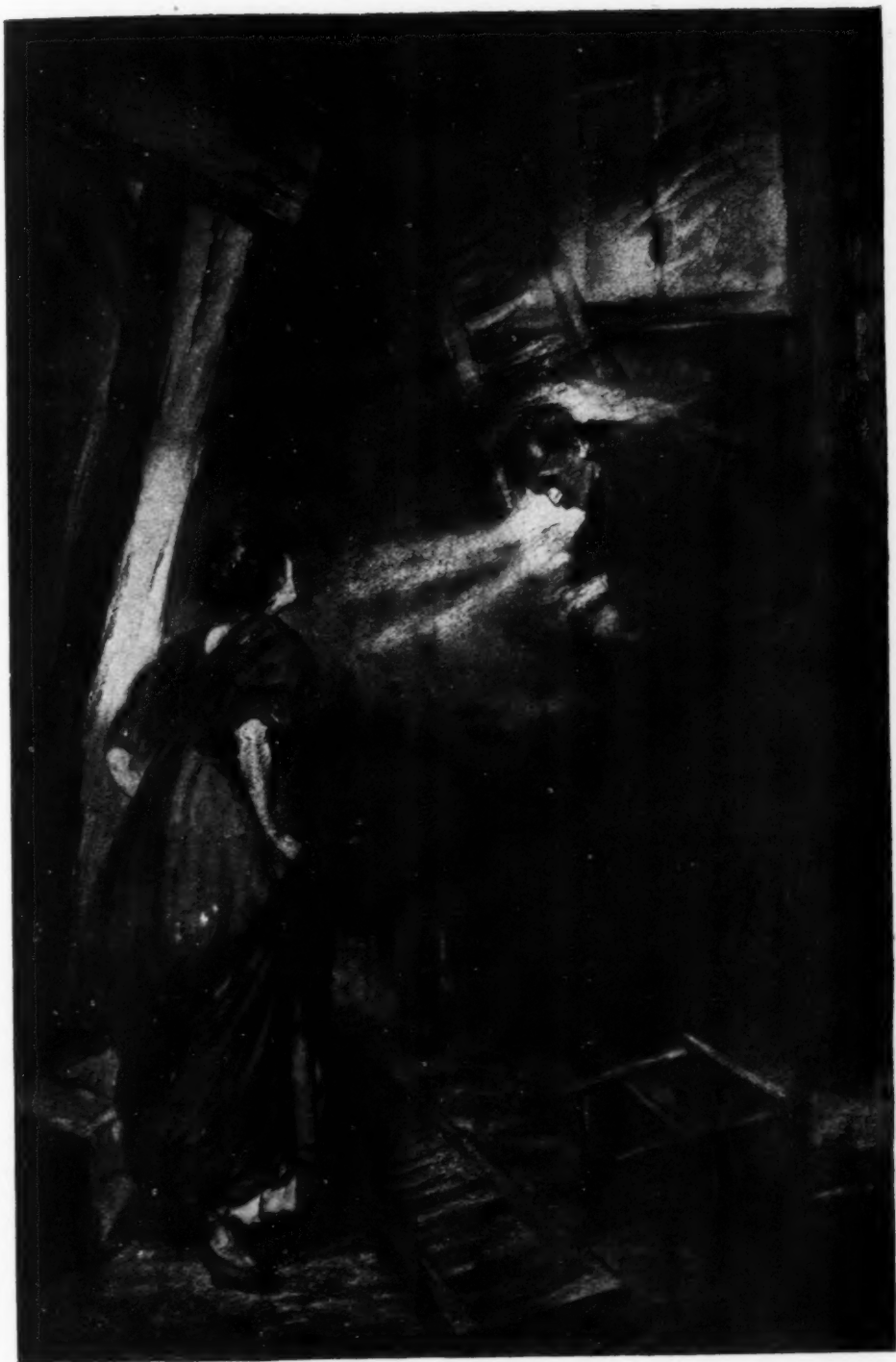
"Thanks for letting it go at that name." She looked directly at me for a moment. "Wilton Boyd and I worked together," she went on, again light, careless, cheerful. "It was a wonderful engagement."

"It must have been. There wasn't a supper-table in town that did not yawn for you."

"I never went. That's what kept it so wonderful. But I loved every little bit of attention I got, no matter how unworthy, how insincere, almost insulting, even. Wilt and I lived in the same boarding-house — 'Mother' Marshall's, up on Forty-seventh Street. She used to have some milk and canned tongue, or bread and prunes, or watermelon, set out in the kitchen for us. We'd go down there after the performance. And I'd tell Wilt all the invitations I'd had, show him the letters, notes, cards, telegrams. It was horrid of me, I know. But no one else saw them, and he would never in the world have told. Oh, if I could only make you see the way that kitchen sometimes looked to Wilt and me, how it spread out and out, how some nights it glowed like a veritable fairy palace."

I did not speak. She seemed to cling to the recollection, to revel in it, to blossom in its radiance.

"Wilton had just come to New York then," she took up again, more quietly.



I remember crawling through after her

"He'd come from a little town near Baltimore, was studying for the piano, working awfully hard. He was terribly ambitious. And he hated the theatre, said he felt ridiculous and mean dancing and singing, 'making up' his face. But I—I loved it."

"Why shouldn't you have? Being the rage ought to be exhilarating."

"Of course, I wasn't that," she returned. "Later, in London, I got a taste of what that must be like."

"My Georgia Gal?"

I hummed a few bars of the appealing little negro melody.

"I heard you there. I don't wonder you sent them quite balmy. The contralto notes in your voice were simply haunting."

"Three of them," she laughed. "Everyone laid stress on there being only three notes in my voice."

"That was simply because they felt foolish being caught crying over a coon song."

We held the idea, the memory: we laughed together. But with it the light faded slowly from her eyes.

"But you," she said, "you know how it all ended."

"That you left the stage," I replied; "married Cassilis. That you're still, in fact, Lady Roderick Cassilis."

She jumped up.

"I'm going," she burst out.

She gave a freshening touch or two to her tattered gown. "I should not have allowed myself this supper, a taste of the sort of people I'd given up. I ought not to have let myself remember, to have lived over any of it, to have talked."

"My dear Lady Roderick," I said, "I've been wondering for some time whether you'd come to that; as soon, I mean, as I had placed you. My knowledge of you and Cassilis, of your brief married life, of your desertion of him, isn't based on the sensational trash the newspapers trumped up. Perhaps I can help you."

"I want no help," she threw back.

Then, immediately she seemed ashamed of her curtness. She spoke quietly, very gently.

"Please forgive me," she said. "After

all you've done! And I do want your help, too. But it's for that boy—Wilton. When I left Roderick I had no place to go; I hadn't a penny; I wanted only to hide, to be forgotten. The only work I knew was the stage; but I had been written about, photographed—and to have gone back as Lady Roderick Cassilis would simply have brought him more misery, have wounded his family very deeply. That was when Wilt came forward as my friend.

"But, you see, while I had been going up, till, in marrying Roderick I had made too high a reach, my poor old friend of the chorus, of 'Mother' Marshall's, had gone as steadily down. The struggle with his music had become too long, too hard, too hopeless for him. He had grown disheartened. He drank; finally it came to drugs. Since we've been here I've been able to brace him up a bit. But if you could do something for him, something stiffening—bring him back to seeing what a lot there is in him, how good he really is, remind him that he's a man among men—"

She broke off abruptly.

"I will," I said slowly. "You can depend on me. I'll do my utmost."

She held out her hand, grasping mine. She moved her lips, two or three times, to speak. But the words she wanted, it appeared, would not come.

"You see," she said, at last, and in a tone of finality, "Wilton hasn't had his life. I have."

She moved toward the door to the hallway.

"I'll have to get away from Denver now. This fire might call attention. People might trace me."

"Wait a moment," I interrupted.

She stood with her hand on the knob.

"Are you sure you're not mistaken, not very wrong, to hide?"

"I'm very right," she corrected. "I'm very sane. You see, I simply love Roderick better than anyone, anything, any possible desire, in the whole world."

"Then why—"

"Because it's best; it's the only way. The marriage itself was the mistake. The Duke was furious. He might ultimately have been brought 'round. But in his



"I left him to believe anything he liked"

rage he intimated that the stage might not be the only objection to me. Roderick flew into a passion. He never saw his father after that scene. His brother and Lady Harborough received me in a half-hearted sort of way, but the rest took their cue from the Duke."

She let her hand drop and moved a step or two nearer me, her eyes looking directly into mine.

"Through it all Roderick was wonderful to me. I want you to know that, to believe it, to remember it. People who pretended to be my friends, gossips, sensationalists, invented absurd stories about him, ridiculous reasons why I left him. It simply was that when I saw him cut off from his family, giving up his clubs, his regiment; avoiding people; growing shabby; I could not bear it. There was

no money—and it only would have made things worse for me to have gone back on the stage."

"So that was it—was all—was why you left him?"

"It was the only way. I simply disappeared. I left him to believe anything he liked. The worst would make it easiest for him."

"It's absurd," I said. "If you want to know what I think: it's absurd!"

"Almost immediately things began to mend," she went on in subdued, colorless contradiction. "I followed his life, read of his recurring visits to the right people, to houses he had avoided, to his family. Then the First-Secretaryship with Sir Jasper at Madrid. It is in the air, is already intimated, that the post is a feeler, a stepping-stone toward rehabilitating him politically, toward resuming his career."

Her lifeless tone, her inert acceptance of hopelessness, her matter-of-fact recital of her life's tragedy, roused me, infuriated me.

"If you know that much," I threw at her roughly, "then, of course, you know that the Duke is dead, that Harborough has succeeded."

"That was the only time I wrote to him; had it sent from another city. In it I asked if the British law would allow him to divorce me for desertion, or if he wanted me to divorce him."

"I'll tell you then something that you don't know," I hurled back. "I was with him when that letter came." She drew away in surprise. "His brother had been insistent that he marry. They have no children, you know; no hope of any. And they are very anxious, very English, about the succession. They had almost persuaded him to divorce you, to marry—well, it doesn't matter whom. But she's my cousin; that is how I came into the affair."

"But when your letter came—there

was a gleam of hope that he might find you—he turned round, pulled out, broke it off."

She gave a sudden gulp, turned, opened the door to the hallway. I dashed over; drew her away; closed the door.

"I'm going," she said. "I'm going, do you hear? I'm going!"

Her voice quivered and was shrill. Her breath came quickly. She trembled.

"Where?" I asked.

"Somewhere—anywhere. Away. Nobody shall know. I can't bear this any longer!"

"You sha'n't go," I returned firmly.

"I am going to take this thing into my own hands. Will you promise not to leave Denver?"

"No."

"Well, you mayn't promise; but you'll stay."

I'm afraid I shook a large, clumsy finger at her as one might at wayward child.

"You'll stay right here till I've cabled to Madrid and till I've got an answer to show you, to prove to you the difference between fanciful self-sacrifice and good, hard common-sense—and love, do you understand? Love!"

"You're quite mad," she gasped.

"I'm mad enough to use any preposterous means I may have to show you what love really is—what the real sort, what a *man's* love sizes up to!"

I had slipped between her and the door.

"Let me go!" she cried.

"Not till you see that cablegram from Madrid."

Quick as a streak of lightning I opened the door, slipped out, slammed it shut, turned the key.

"Call young Boyd's nurse," I called through the keyhole. "She'll make you comfortable for the night."

Then I went down to the office and cabled to Madrid.

Sealed Lips

Dorothy Dacres Removes a Blot from Her 'Scutcheon

BY WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

Author of "Bribed," "The Red Mouse," etc

ILLUSTRATED BY JAY HAMBIDGE

JUST sign that, will you, Llandgraff?"

This commonplace request, made by Jonathan Dacres, smote his daughter, Dorothy, with sudden force. Not that there was anything in the utterance itself, or in the speaker's voice, that arrested her attention—not at all. The one fact of significance was that she had believed her father to be alone.

She could have sworn he was alone; she had heard no one enter; there had been no voices in the hall; and she had stolen down to her father's study, as was her custom, to spend the evening with him. She had reached his study door—ajar as was usual; had almost touched it with her fingers to push it open—

When, suddenly, she had drawn back at his words:

"Just sign that, will you, Llandgraff?"

Dorothy Dacres stood for one instant



Dorothy stood for one instant in uncertainty

in uncertainty. Should she steal back upstairs again, or would it be better to wait in the breakfast-room until Llandgraff had gone? She knew that it made not one iota's difference which she did—yet she hesitated, in doubt. For unconsciously, she found herself gazing through the half-opened door. She knew vaguely that she was looking at Llandgraff. She noted that her father had placed before him a sheet of paper; heard her father cross the room; saw Llandgraff's cunning eyes following him; saw Llandgraff seize a pen. And then—

She retraced her steps and

stole back to her room as she had come.

Why? What edict of the Fates had given her to see this much and no more? And why did the incident impress her in the least?

Five minutes later she had dismissed as trivial, the things she had heard and

seen—they were as nothing; they constituted merely an ordinary business transaction between one lawyer and another; a good lawyer, and—as Dorothy had often told herself—a mighty bad one.

"Why doesn't he go?" she exclaimed petulantly to herself, after the lapse of minutes that seemed like hours.

And yet, months later, under the stigma that rested so heavily, so disgracefully upon her, she was able to reconstruct that scene as clearly as if it had been photographed upon her brain.—The utterance of her father—the sheet of paper—the cunning glance of Llandgraff—his seizure of a pen—they were all there, indelibly stamped upon her consciousness. And indelibly stamped upon her consciousness as well was one vain regret—that she had not watched and waited one, two—five minutes longer, to perceive what happened, or what did not happen. But all these sensations assailed her long afterwards—*Now*, she was waiting in her room for Llandgraff to go. Suddenly, a voice:

"Dorothy—oh, Dolly girl."

It was her father's, and she obeyed it, dashing impulsively down the whole length of the upper hall and down the stairs, two steps at a time. At the foot she halted breathless and, once more, surprised. For Jonathan Dacres was not yet alone. Llewellyn Llandgraff, his brother in the law, stood by his side, sphinx-like, imperturbable, watching, with inward satisfaction, her lithe, impulsive grace as she descended; watching, still with inward satisfaction, the sudden frigidity that enveloped her, as she came face to face with him. Llandgraff liked enigmas, especially attractive ones—and it was *this* enigma, who stood before him with parted lips, flushed face, and almost disheveled hair, that brought him so frequently to the house of Jonathan Dacres, rather than to his office.

Jonathan Dacres coughed spasmodically.

"Dorothy," he said, "will you—see—Mr. Llandgraff—to—the door. The night air—" He gasped, still coughing. "I dare—not go."

For answer, Dorothy pushed her father back into the warm study, from which he had emerged, and led Llandgraff down the broad hall, chatting volubly the while to keep him from talking.

But she couldn't keep him from looking at her, and it was Llandgraff's eyes that she dreaded most. When they had reached the big door, and stood under the dim light of the hall, he extended his hand and took hers and held it. His speech was nothing—he talked the most impersonal commonplaces—but his eyes drove a deeper meaning unpleasantly home, forced a disagreeable personality disagreeably upon her.

When he had gone, she pressed her hands for one instant against her hot face, as if to shut out the memory of his glance, and then she darted back into the presence of her father.

"Father!" she exclaimed, as she paused just inside the study door, "father! what's the matter, father?"

For a moment there was no response. Jonathan Dacres was sitting forward and motionless in his leather chair, his arms resting on the cloth-covered table, his face buried in his hands.

For one instant Dorothy felt her blood turn cold around her heart. Then with some unknown fear upon her, she sped swiftly to his side and placed her hand gently on his shoulder.

At her touch, the old man straightened up, and shook his head.

"Nothing much the matter, girlie," he assured her with a brave smile, "only—discouragement."

"Discouragement," she repeated, puzzled, "*you*—discouraged. You!"

He nodded. "I'm suffering the penalty of having lived a good, old-fashioned, honest lawyer's life, girlie," he went on, "I'm down and out, that's all."

"Down and out," she faltered, "I—don't—quite understand."

He smiled more feebly.

"Are you too old-fashioned, too, to understand what it means—down and out? It means we're done for. We haven't a dollar in the world—not a dollar in the world."

There was a silence, deep, sudden, tense, between them. The girl glanced



"Nothing much the matter, girlie, only—discouragement"

keenly at her father's face—but there was no uncanny glare about his eyes.

Then suddenly she gripped him by the arm and pointed vaguely toward the hall.

"Has—has he—has Llandgraff anything to do with—with your being down and out?"

Jonathan Dacres drew himself up, and threw one leg across the other.

"Dear me, no," he answered; "only this—his visit here to-night, closed out for good the Hungerford estate."

"The Hungerford estate," she repeated, familiarly.

It seemed to Dorothy that ever since she could remember, she had heard of the Hungerford estate. There were times in the past when the entire community had rocked to and fro in the strife over the Hungerford estate.

"I've tried to close it out many and many a time," her father went on, "but it wouldn't be closed out. It's been a regular 'Jarndyce *vs.* Jarndyce' to me, but against my will—against my will. And yet, Dorothy—" He paused. "It's the biggest business that I've ever had. We've lived upon it almost—almost. Six months ago I turned over half-a-million to the residuary-legatees and devisees, and to-night—to-night I turned over the last dollar—seventy-five thousand dollars—to Llewellyn Llandgraff."

"But why to him?" asked Dorothy.

"Because," her father answered, "he's the general guardian of two infants under fourteen years of age—Jean Hungerford, a girl, and her little brother, William Hungerford, 3d. That's why. And that winds up the Hungerford estate, and that about winds us up."

Presently Jonathan Dacres sighed and smiled.

"You can't understand it, can you, daughter?" he asked. "Why a leader of the bar in a place like this should ever become a pauper. Well, I'll tell you. I've watched 'em. I've seen 'em go down one after the other—the men who practised law in the old-fashioned way—the men who were just lawyers and nothing else. And they die poor nowadays—they all die poor."

"And I thought," exclaimed Dorothy, involuntarily, "that we were rich."

"Does—does it signify so much to you?" he asked.

"No—no," she was quick to answer, "not for myself. For—for you?"

"For me," he assured her, "it's quite enough that we are—"

"Pals," she finished for him, pressing her cheek against his, "always pals."

He held her from him and gazed smilingly into her eyes.

"You see," he said, "it's not our fault. Times have changed—changed. The title companies—they get all the real-estate business, all of it. The trust companies, they get the big estates. Every railroad company has its own law department, every insurance company, every big manufactory. They get the cream—for the rest of us, skim milk. The old way—the law is dead—dead. I'm down and out."

"The law is dead," repeated Dorothy, vaguely. "I don't see why." She caught her father's hand within her own. "Oh," she cried, "if you'd had a son—if you'd only had a son instead of me! If I'd only been a boy!"

He shook his head vigorously. "If it hadn't been for you, a girl, I'd have pegged out long ago. We wouldn't have been such—pals—if you'd been a boy. No—no—and yet," he paused and passed his hand across his forehead.

The three months following were like a long nightmare to Dorothy Dacres. It is sad business, watching an old man die. But he died, at last, and it thrilled the girl that she had lived to behold the big old fashioned city rise up in his honor.

"An honest lawyer of the old school," everybody said.

And yet, when Dorothy came back to the echoing, empty house, groaning as it was under the weight of its first and second mortgages, she thought of but one thing.

"Pals, my father," she whispered to his unseen presence, "always pals."

It was ten days after the funeral that Llandgraff called upon her; and this time there was no insinuation in his manner; he was straightforward, but businesslike.

"Miss Dacres," he explained, "I'm very sorry to trouble you in this dark hour, but—I am, as you may not know, the general guardian of two of the Hungerford infants—Billy Hungerford and his sister, Jean Hungerford. I was appointed by the Orphans' Court."

He passed over a document. "There are my letters," he went on, "and you also may not know that about six months before your father's death a decree was entered in the Hungerford estate directing him, the sole trustee, to distribute all the assets of the estate."

"Yes," she answered, eagerly. "He told me all about it. And he *did* distribute all the assets of the estate."

Llandgraff's eyes narrowed; his nose twitched. "All," he assented, "except the funds belonging to my wards. Those I have come to you to obtain."

Dorothy's eyes searched his, her own puzzled. "Why—why—" she stammered, "I am *sure* he told me he had—had cleaned it all up—"

"All but seventy-five thousand due the infants," returned Llandgraff, easily.

Dorothy's brow contracted. She flashed a sudden glance of certainty toward Llandgraff. For suddenly, her memory had flashed forth a phrase that patched itself together out of the gloom: "*Just sign that, will you, Llandgraff!*"

"I thought," she went on, "that you got that money the—the last time you were here—my father told me—you signed *something*, didn't you?"

For one instant Llandgraff lost his grip upon himself. "*I* signed something?" he repeated, and there was a tremor in his voice that Dorothy caught. "*Never*," he repeated.

"My dear Miss Dacres," he said, "you are unnecessarily agitated. All that you need do—all that I want you to do, is to get seventy-five thousand dollars worth of bonds—Tri-State bonds—out of your father's safe and deliver them to me. You can do it now, or later, as you choose."

He rose.

"You can drop me a line when to call again," he said.

She detained him.

She flew to the safe and opened it.

There, in full view of both of them, was the old, time-worn, battered tin box, with its familiar title: "Hungerford Estate" on its cover.

Dorothy fumbled in a small safe-drawer for the key of the box, found it, then brought both to her father's desk.

"Unquestionably," he said, "the bonds are inside."

The girl's face was white.

"We—we'll see," she stammered.

She inserted the tiny key in the lock and threw back the cover to the box.

The box was empty.

Empty? No, not quite. For there, loosely folded and lying on its bottom, was a single sheet of paper. Dorothy's face flushed with pleasure.

"I knew," she gasped, "when I lifted up the box, that there could not be any bonds in it. But here—this is what you signed that night, I think."

Llandgraff's pupils narrowed to pin points. A grim smile gathered about the corners of his mouth.

"Let us see what it is," he said.

Slowly Dorothy opened the paper, and then started back. There was no signature upon it.

"And yet," she said, "it is—it is a receipt for the bonds—the Tri-State bonds—a receipt from you."

Silence.

Then Llandgraff spoke in hard, even tones. "*Not* from me," he answered, "I never signed it, don't you see?"

"But—you were *going* to sign it," she exclaimed, suddenly; "you—you picked up a pen to sign it—"

"Absurd!" he denied.

"But I saw you," she challenged.

For one instant Llandgraff wavered; then he straightened up.

"You saw me!" he exclaimed. "Then you must have seen more. You must have seen your father go to this very box, fumble with it, and come back to me, and tell me that he desired to make a complete memo. of each bond—you must have heard him say that, and must have heard him say further, that he would write me when the bonds were ready. You *saw*—then you must have seen me hand the receipt back to him, *unsigned*—"



"We must hush it up," was his decision

"And—you didn't get the bonds?" she faltered. He *knew*, then, that he had won.

"Unquestionably—*no*," he answered.

Dorothy smiled. "He probably placed them in some other place," she said, "either here or at—at the office, in the big safe there. I shall have a search made for them at once. And I shall let you know."

He held out his hand. "It's only for the little ones I'm anxious," he announced; "they need their income badly, don't you see?"

"I shall search for them," she said.

Search—she did search; everybody

searched, every-where. But quite in vain. There were no Tri-State bonds—no bonds of any kind—no cash of any kind. Evidences of adversity there were, everywhere, but nothing else.

Through all the search, Llandgraff was quite silent. His was the waiting part. And Dorothy shivered as she recognized that hers was the next move. She made it. She sent for Llandgraff.

"I—I can't find those bonds," she told him.

He was terribly quiet about it. He thought it over a long while in silence. Finally he nodded.

"We must hush it up," was his decision, at last.

She gasped. "Hush—what up?" she demanded.

He explained, as gently as he could, that her father was a defaulter, that he had betrayed his trust. Jonathan Dacres had had the bonds, there was no doubt about that. The Orphans' Court had so found in its decree passing his accounts. And it had directed him to turn them over to Llandgraff, guardian of the Hungerford infants. That he had failed to do so was clear.

"It *must* be hushed up," whispered Llandgraff, drawing nearer to her, "otherwise it will involve an infamous scandal, shame, disgrace. Think of a man like Jonathan Dacres taking the last dollar that these babies had."

She stopped him. "*Thanks*," she cried,

in her clear, young tones, "to you for putting it so strongly. For I know that Jonathan Dacres never did a thing like that.

He shrugged. "The evidence," he went on, "is against him.—Listen!" he said, and he stretched forth his arm until his hand touched hers. "I'm going to tell you how this great name of your father can remain untarnished—I have a plan—a way out of the difficulty, Dorothy—"

"What is it?" she returned.

"Marry me."

He spoke with brutal directness, for he felt that he held the upper hand. But he had reckoned without his host. For with all her girlishness—and boyishness, at times—with all her gentle, youthful femininity, there was within the person of Dorothy Dacres a calculating quality as hard as flint—an inheritance from her father. She met Llandgraff's eyes frankly.

"And if I marry you," she said, "how are you going to cover it up? Are you going to pay this seventy-five thousand dollars to these infants? Are you?"

He held up his hand: "Well—" he began.

"Wait!" she exclaimed. "A step further. Have you *got* seventy-five thousand dollars? Nobody in town believes you have—and if you haven't, *how* are we going to hush it up? That's what I've got to know."

He turned, looked away, then he came boldly to the front.

"Yes," he replied, "I have seventy-five thousand dollars."

"Then," she declared, "it is my belief that that seventy-five thousand you have *is* the estate of these infants. I know you got it. My father told me so."

"Told you so," he sneered; "of course he told you so. But let *me* tell you this—"

The wonder to Dorothy afterwards was that she had permitted him to go on, but she did. And Llewellyn Llandgraff went on—making love to her with the air of one who holds a whip in his hand, and holding the whip, his lips uttered the words that his soul dictated—and when he finished, Dorothy, her face flaming, knew too well Llandgraff's views of love, knew too well why he wanted her for his wife.

"Is that all you have to say?" she asked, when he ceased speaking.

It seemed to be.

"Well, then," she challenged, "you have given me three days to decide whether I'm to marry you—I'll give you three days to produce your seventy-five thousand dollars that these infants are to get. That's all, Mr. Llandgraff. You may go."

At the end of the bad half-hour that followed his departure, she telephoned for Chan Lefferts and Chan came.

Chandler Lefferts was a lawyer, too, and what's more, he was down and out, but for a different reason than Jonathan Dacres'. Chan Lefferts was starting out in practice—had just hung out his shingle—and of course that meant starvation for a while. Chandler Lefferts paused as he entered the room. Dorothy had never appealed to him so much as now, and now, more than ever, was it harder for him to leave unspoken the thoughts of her that had come to fill all his young life. It was not for him to talk matrimony—not yet.

"What's up, Dorothy?" he asked, sinking into a chair, and drawing off his gloves.

"I'm in trouble, Chan," she confessed.

Then she told him the whole story, from beginning to end—all, except the brutal proposal of marriage that Llandgraff had made her.

Chan Lefferts heard with growing wonder and surprise, and—no, *not* indignation. For, though he could not tell her so, it was a part of his creed that almost any man is capable of doing almost anything.

He had seen all too many, many fine, good men, go wrong, and it would not have astonished him in the least if Jonathan Dacres, respected member of the bar that he was, *had* used up this money. Other good men had done similarly. But he kept these thoughts to himself, and listened to the girl beside him.

"What I believe, Chan," she was saying, "is that Llandgraff got those bonds that night; that he pretended to, but didn't sign that receipt, on the chance that it might never be discovered."

"If it *was* discovered," admitted Lefferts, "he could correct it as a mere mis-

take, and if not— Looks good, Dorothy. Go on."

"Beside," she insisted, "what court or jury would believe—why my father *told* me that he turned them over—"

Lefferts shook his head. "Yes, but you can't tell that. That's hearsay," he explained.

He kept on explaining, for she couldn't understand at once.

"Do you mean to say," she demanded, "that I can't tell what I know."

"You only know it from your father," he continued; "he's the only man who *knows*—save Llandgraff—and death has sealed your father's lips, you see."

"What am I going to do?" she wailed.

"What kind of bonds?" he queried.

"Tri-State R. R. Co."

He frowned. "Good bonds," he said, "but negotiable—pass from hand to hand. Wait a bit; don't worry; we'll go to all the bankers here in town, and—"

They did, but without avail. The possessor of the bonds might have taken them to any city in the universe, and disposed of them—Chicago, Pittsburgh, New York, Boston—anywhere. They could have passed through fifty hands by this time. It was no use. They located not a single bond, and if they had, its present owner could not have told who put it on the market—Llandgraff or Dacres.

"Is Llandgraff rich?" asked Dorothy of Lefferts, one day.

Chan laughed. "No," he replied. "A few months ago he was on the verge of bankruptcy—some Wall Street deal, I'm told."

Dorothy sighed with relief. For at the end of the three days she was able to hold out her hand with assurance for the cash that was to cover up her father's defalcation—and it was not forthcoming.

"You marry me, and I'll hush it up all right," said Llewellyn Llandgraff.

But Dorothy only drew herself up to her full height, which wasn't very high, and flashed back her refusal.

"The memory of my father will not let me hush it up," she said. Her glance was as steady as Llandgraff's.

"Then you must bear the consequences," he threatened.

So Dorothy Dacres waited, every

nerve tingling within her, for the storm to break.

It broke, and she bowed before it—there were times in the agony of it all, when she felt that she would have done anything to escape the stigma, the disgrace, the shame of it—even to marrying Llandgraff.

And there was no end to it. Rumors and whisperings were followed by assertions—these by endless newspaper accounts, interviews—these by a suit at law. Dorothy felt herself slinking along the street, afraid to meet public or private gaze—afraid to meet her friends. The horror of it burned into her heart.

Then, in the midst of it all, Chan Lefferts called upon her one night.

"Dorothy," he cried, eagerly, "listen—listen to me. I want you to come—away from this—with me. I haven't a dollar and you haven't, but we'll go West, where people don't know and don't care. I love you—and I hope that you—"

"Stop!" she cried, and there was a new ring in her voice.

She had become suddenly another Dorothy Dacres. She pointed to two photographs in the *Morning Mail*.

"Chan," she cried, "look at those two—Jean Hungerford—and her brother, Billy. My father never robbed them of a dollar, but people say he did. And do you know about them—that they haven't any father or mother—that they haven't a relative in the world—that nobody cares anything about them—that they've got nothing ahead of them but starvation—do you understand? Well, then, understand something else! My father was their trustee in his lifetime—he took care of their money—and I'm not going to stop—I'm going to take care of them."

"Llandgraff is their guardian," said Lefferts.

"Llandgraff has said in interviews that he can do nothing for them—it is up to me."

Lefferts shook his head. "You will only lend the semblance of truth to these charges against your father," he persisted.

"You don't understand me," she went on, her voice ringing with a new determination; "it's only a part of my scheme.

My father was my pal—my father is going to live in me—I'm going to fight his battle, carry on his work."

"What do you mean?" asked Lefferts.

She held out her hand to him, and it seemed to him as if there was a glory in her face.

"The law—the law," she cried, "the law is in my blood, Chandler. Listen! I'm the only woman in a century of my ancestors. They were all men—Governors, Chancellors—all the Dacres—Judges, Counselors—I'm the only woman of them all. But their blood is in my veins, just as it was in my father's veins. He said the law was dead; I say it is alive. The law—it's the law for me. The law has placed a stigma on my father's name; the law has got to take it off through me. Llandgraff has got the law on me. I'll get the law on him. I can't help it, Chandler. I'm not a woman any more—I'm a man. I'm nineteen years old, but I'm a man, with a man's life ahead of me. You can't stop me, Chan. Nobody can stop me. 'Ride through,' that is the Dacres motto, and I'm going to follow it—I'm going to win out in the law!"

Lefferts held his breath. "You don't know what you're up against," he said, bitterly.

"Thank heaven, I don't," she answered simply, "but this I know: My father is not dead; he lives—in me—in me."

The next two years were bitter years for Dorothy Dacres. She was very poor. She felt it more than the

little Hungerfords, whom she had taken under her wing, for they were too young to remember the days of their luxury. Only, once in a while, they would cut her to the quick by blurting out: "We had a pony cart like that."

But they loved her—that was solace to her soul. For Dorothy Dacres knew that she had to love and be loved. And on the night after her outburst to Chandler Lefferts, she had lain all night face downward on her bed, sobbing. For Dorothy was putting behind her things that of right belonged to her. Young as she was, in her soul she knew that she was meant to mate—that of all women in this world, she was a marrying woman—she hardly dared to whisper it to herself. And when she had first sought out the helpless Hungerfords, her grim purpose to learn the law almost faltered.

"To arms—to arms!" she cried en-



"Dorothy, I want you to come—with me"

couragement within herself. "I'm going to beat out Llandgraff yet. I'm going to win out in the law."

And she cuddled the little Hungerfords in her arms, as a hen gathers her first brood under her wings, until they knew, and loved her. Yet she continued shaking her head at Chan Lefferts.

"I've passed the stage of matrimony, Chan," she said. "I'm a mother, don't you see."

"A mother-in-law, you mean," Chan growled.

II

It was a strange coincidence that Peggy Van Clief should have been her first client. Peggy had been her firmest friend—except Chan Lefferts—through it all. And Peggy had vowed, with all the ardor of her youthful friendship, that if she ever needed a lawyer she would employ a woman lawyer, and that that woman lawyer should be Dorothy herself. Peggy's father—Van Clief, the cashier of the County National, had been dead a month, when Peggy came rushing into the cosy little office of Dorothy Dacres, counselor at law, or "D. Dacres," as it said upon the door.

"I don't know what to do," said Peggy, her eyes red with excitement. "It's about this Mr. Llandgraff—"

Dorothy sniffed and rubbed her nose. "Llandgraff!" she exclaimed.

"Yes," answered Peggy Van Clief, "he's been making such a fuss since father died. You know how father died, don't you? Dropped right out of his office chair," Peggy rubbed her eyes a bit more at the recollection, "and—and Mr. Llandgraff was there at the time, it seems."

"I didn't know that," exclaimed the woman lawyer.

"He died of heart failure," said Peggy, "and the doctor thought it was excitement—and Mr. Llandgraff is sure it was. He says—what do you think—that my father and he, Llandgraff, had made over four hundred thousand dollars on Wall Street—the 'Street,' he calls it—and that it was that that killed my father—"

She stopped.

"Doctor Peterson," she went on in a little while, "believes that Mr. Llandgraff is right, but he doesn't know, and nobody else knows just what Mr. Llandgraff and I know about the money that they made upon the 'Street.'"

"Tell me about that," said Dorothy, eagerly.

"Mr. Llandgraff says that he got certain information about P. Q. & R. stock—a tip, he calls it—and he brought it to my father—and my father got some money somewhere—out of the bank or somewhere—and they went in together—and they won—"

"Go on," urged Dorothy, grimly.

"And—and they didn't want to have any checks or writing about it, because it was speculation on the 'Street'—though why that isn't all right, I'd like to know, for it made a lot of money for them—and, well, they didn't have any. Only, the day he got the money, he brought it—all bills—to my father. Cash, you understand—to my father in his private office at the bank. And it was after banking hours—and so my father put it all in his private safe in his private office, and locked the door, and—"

"And then?" said Dorothy.

Peggy burst into tears. "Then he dropped dead," she said.

Whereupon D. Dacres quickly rose and locked *her* door, and very unprofessionally placed her arms around her client's shoulders until she had become more calm.

"And now," went on Peggy, smiling at the recollection, "this Mr. Llandgraff comes up to the house every day like a chicken with its head cut off—and asking me to do the square thing—says I ought to do the square thing—that my father always did, and he hopes I will—"

"Why," went on Peggy, "of course I shall. Why shouldn't I?"

Dorothy nodded. "Peggy," she said, "have you any reason to believe that he tells the truth?"

"Only this," answered her client, producing a folded piece of paper. "That's father's writing," she remarked, "and I found it in—in his—vest-pocket—afterwards."

Dorothy seized it. It was a pencil memorandum:

P. Q. & R. deal. Profits, one-half to Llandgraff. One-half to me.

Dorothy was beside her client again. "Tell me," she exclaimed eagerly, "have you said a word about this to Llewellyn Llandgraff? Answer, right away."

"N-no," answered Peggy, flushing. "He was so—so—I don't know, I wouldn't tell him anything. Let me tell you what he said to me."

Dorothy closed her ears. "I won't hear it," she replied. "But listen, Peggy. Will you do one thing for me—you've wanted to do a whole lot, but I want you to do just one?"

"Yes," answered Peggy, breathlessly. "Tell me what."

"Do as I tell you in this matter," was the suggestion, "and do nothing else. Will you leave it absolutely in my hands?"

"I promise," answered Peggy.

The counselor-at-law straightened up as if the burden of ages had slipped from her shoulders.

"If Llandgraff calls on you again," said Dorothy, "refer him to me."

Three weeks later, Llewellyn Llandgraff sat on one side of a desk in a little office and Dorothy Dacres sat on the other.

"What did you find?" asked Llandgraff.

"Upon opening the little safe," was the reply, "we found four hundred thousand dollars in cash—the property of the intestate."

"Half of it was mine," said Llandgraff.

Dorothy leaned forward. "I beg your pardon?" she inquired.

"Half of it was mine," he repeated.

She nodded. "Where is the evidence?" she asked.

Llewellyn Llandgraff was silent for a moment. "My evidence in court would clear it up at once," he returned.

"Your evidence," she laughed. She opened a book that lay upon her desk. "You're a lawyer, Llandgraff," she said, without using the prefix to his name,

"and you must understand one of the commonest rules of evidence by heart."

"Listen to rule No. 263. It reads like this:

"No party to any civil action shall be permitted to give testimony as to any transaction with or statement made by any testator or intestate represented in said action."

"You know that rule as well as I do, Llandgraff," she went on, "and you know what it means. It means that since death has closed the lips of one party to the transaction, the law seals the lips of the other party. *You* know that. It's as old as the hills, that rule. That eliminates *your* testimony. Now, give me the *other* evidence that you've got."

Llandgraff's face turned white, but his lip curled. "So, you're not going to be square?" he exclaimed.

"Square!" she cried. "Square! This looks like an attempt to steal. It looks like the case of a man with a bad reputation about town attempting to steal two hundred thousand dollars from the estate of an upright citizen."

He snapped his fingers. "Upright citizen!" he exclaimed, "well and good! I've got you now. There's one thing I can show, and that is, that Van Clief, this upright citizen, as you call him, dabbled in the 'Street' with the money of the bank. If he'd lost, he'd have been a thief. If he'd lost he'd have gone to jail—that's what."

"Go ahead," was the answer, as Dorothy shrugged her shoulders; "that doesn't get you the two hundred thousand that you claim. Good-day."

He stared at her for a full minute.

"Aren't you going to be square?" he demanded.

She waved her hand. "You can go, Llandgraff," she exclaimed.

As he started through the door—

"Stop!" she cried suddenly.

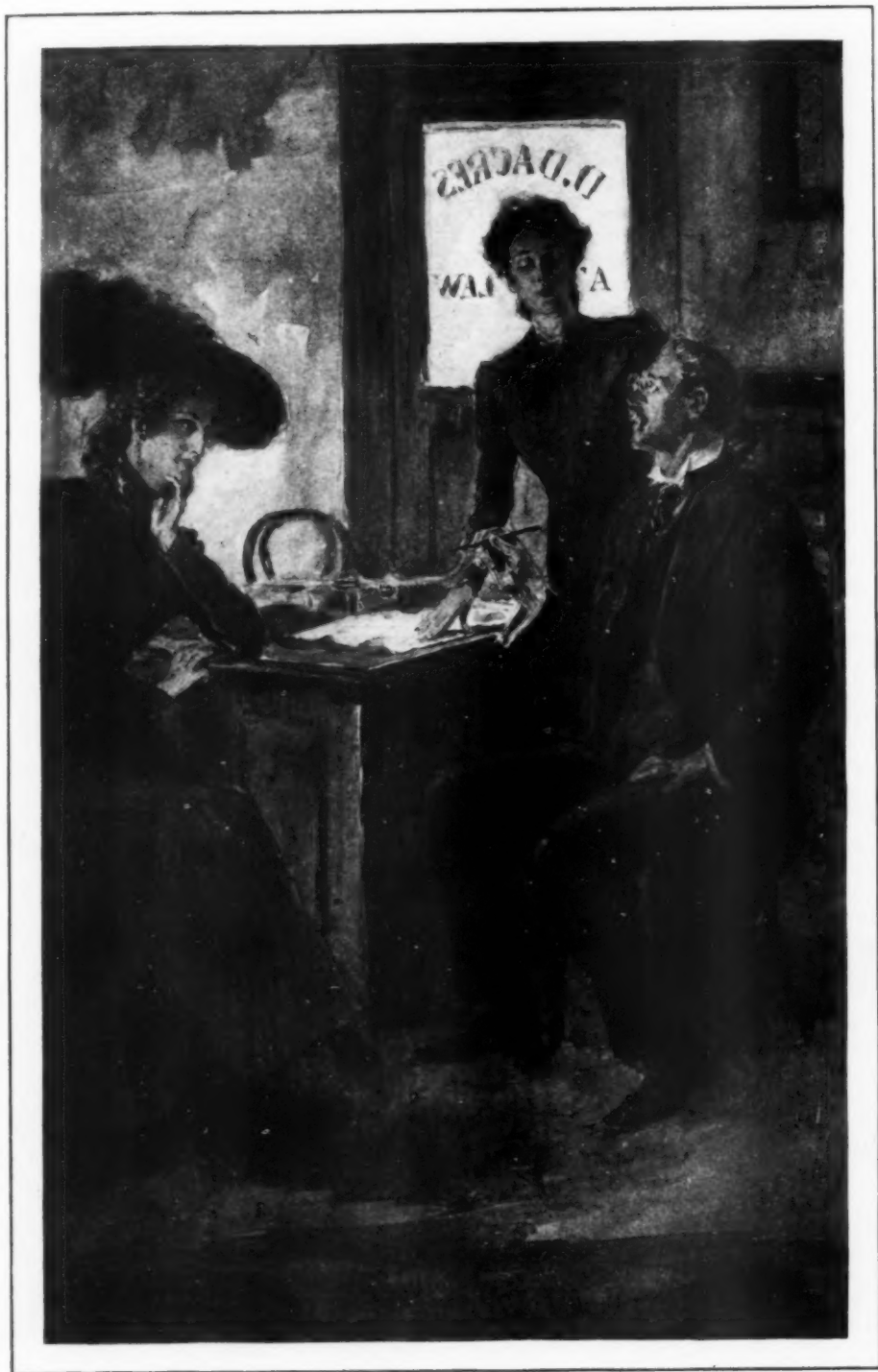
He turned on the threshold.

"Sit down," she said.

He obeyed.

She stepped into an ante-room, and clutched Peggy Van Clief by the shoulder.

"Peggy," she whispered, "I want you to come in here, and do nothing save nod



"And," went on Llandgraff, "what if I don't sign?"

your head every time I look at you. You understand?"

Peggy came, understanding, and took the third seat at the flat-topped desk.

"Miss Van Clief," said Dorothy, "Mr. Llewellyn Llandgraff is about to make a confession. Nearly four years ago he received seventy-five thousand dollars' worth of Tri-State bonds from my father. He pretended to sign a receipt, but didn't do it. He merely handed it back folded, and my father filed it away. Some one saw all this, some one knows it all."

"Who knows it?" queried Llandgraff, the perspiration standing in beads upon his brow.

"You," returned Dorothy calmly, "and one other."

She looked suddenly at Peggy, and Peggy nodded.

Llandgraff, ashen, stared.

"The decree of the court had charged my father with the possession of the bonds, Peggy," went on Dorothy, "and when he delivered them up, he had nothing to show except an unsigned receipt which he never examined. Death sealed his lips—and until now, he has been unable to wipe out the stain upon him — Now, friend Llandgraff is in a worse predicament, for he is about to lose money, which is worth more to him than honor, or his reputation. The law has sealed his lips. We're going to compromise."

"How?" muttered Llandgraff.

"You're going to find those bonds, and you're going to right my father in your own way, and at your own expense—even at the expense of thousands—and you're going to sign a written statement now of the facts about my father."

"Oh, don't be afraid. It won't be published, this confession. Your name will not be mentioned in connection with my father. This confession will stay locked up in my safe, to remain there until the day when you attempt to drag the name of Van Clief into the mud. You understand?"

"And I get my money?" queried Llandgraff.

Dorothy nodded.

"And," went on Llandgraff, "what if I don't sign?"

Dorothy Dacres rose and stood over him. "If you don't sign," she cried, "then you must take the consequence. For there's one thing that you haven't realized—that though I didn't see the whole of the Tri-State transaction, there was one person who *did* see it—and all of it—from start to finish, Llandgraff."

She looked at Peggy Van Clief.

Peggy nodded.

Llandgraff's eyelids flickered. He suddenly remembered that Peggy Van Clief's house and the Dacres' home adjoined.

"You'll be square," he said, and signed.

Two days later scareheads in the papers announced the fact that two safe-experts, in overhauling the old safe of Jonathan Dacres, had discovered a secret drawer within it, and within the drawer had been found the Tri-State bonds. The Hungerford funds were quite intact and Jonathan Dacres' only crime had been in keeping them *too* safe. Such was the story that Llandgraff told.

The news spread like wild-fire—it was not only a bully bit of news, but Llandgraff pushed it all over the state until, in truth, the truth had caught up with the lie.

"You see," Dorothy explained to Peggy her client, after it was all over, "it had to be a compromise—for Llandgraff might have injured other people if he had actually got his back up against a wall. We wouldn't let him have this cash he claimed—and was really entitled to—until he cleared my father's name, so you've done more for me than you ever thought you would."

Peggy was puzzled. "Llandgraff seemed to think," she said, "that I had seen him through our windows—with your father on that night. You mentioned a person who saw it all—who was it?"

Dorothy Dacres smiled gently, and kissed her client.

"That person was my father," she returned.



"I'd like you to try this Craig-Bulkeley assignment"

When the Society-Editor Fell Down

BY CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY

ILLUSTRATED BY HANSON BOOTH

THE Society-editor folded his arms and leaned back in the wooden rocking-chair with the assumed non-chalance of a man who wears laurels for the first time and is trying to conceal the fact. The Paper owed him the job, but it was an old, old debt. It dated back to the day, ten years ago, when he first entered the office at twenty a week with a possible raise of five per, under the alluring espionage of Society. And this had been the bait that, if he got hold of some corking good stuff, there might be a place for him on the City-staff at an unlimited amount per. That was the debt.

The ten years had been a period of bridge tournaments, and arrivals and

departures, and teas. The Society-editor had learned to describe to the last ruffle a *débutante's* fluffy attire. He had grown gray in the pursuit of brides, but everything corking, everything that *popped*—like the story of the Garrison divorce, or the elopement of Geraldine Burke with the family chauffeur, or the breaking of the market the day old man Burke dropped his securities and made for Monte Carlo—all these had slipped the pen of the Society-editor. They had escaped in a perfectly plausible and natural manner through no fault of their own, but the fact remained that they *had* escaped.

The Society-editor commuted to Jersey every day. It was the night he went

home early in order to mow his lawn before dark that Geraldine Burke left town. Also it was proved the next day that her limousine went past the Society-editor's house with Jones of the City-staff in a machine behind. But the Society-editor was having a pleasantly suburban time cutting his grass and never looked up, so, of course, it was Jones who made good on the story.

Then, there had been the Garrison affair. The Society-editor was drinking tea at the Burkes' charity lawn fête—he was often given tea at these functions—when Hemstreet of the sporting page entered the Garrison house, through knowing the cook, and got all the details he needed from the Garrisons' butler. So Hemstreet was promoted from prize-fights to the Front Page—two columns a day—and the Society-editor still stopped where he had been in the beginning.

To exactly appreciate the attitude of the Society-editor toward the debt, one should prosaically marry on twenty-five per, and commute for a matter of ten odd years. One should spend late evenings, when other men drink the bowl of good fellowship at their clubs, adding columns of egg bills and coal bills, and gas bills, children's shoe bills, and other bills too numerous to put down, and then make out a check on an overdrawn account, absent-mindedly. One should see one's wife growing angular and thin-haired over the problem. The Society-editor was a man of strong principle, but he prayed for Scandal. Scandal as a means of paying for school shoes was surely legitimate. But Scandal coyly flitted beside the ruffled skirts of Society and the Society-editor was never able to catch up with her. That is, up to the present time.

It might never have happened if there had been anybody else available in the office, but Jones was laid up with an ankle, and Hemstreet was off on a vacation. The Society-editor was finishing a neat column of patronesses for a musicale, when the Chief came across to his desk and tapped him on the shoulder.

"Busy?" he asked crisply.

"No."

The Society-editor was not very busy; in fact, he was about finished.

"Because, if you're not," the Chief went on, "I'd like you to try this Craig-Bulkeley assignment. You know the facts of the case—young and pretty woman suddenly deserts her husband—husband goes abroad and house is closed without the press getting so much as a word about the affair. Thing's been going on for a month.

"Now, we've got a clew; only Paper in town at that. There's a cabman who took Mrs. Craig's boxes to the Grand Central and checked 'em direct to a little island up in Maine. He kept quiet till now, for he wanted a price on those checks. He's got his price, all right, and it's pretty clear sailing on the story. You've been on the Paper quite a while, haven't you? Well, you ought to be able to get in on this stuff. Never mind the facts, just go up and see the girl, get some atmosphere, and write, I tell you—*write!*"

"We've got to have a story on this thing, and it's got to be a corker, understand? I'll give you a check for your expenses, and, take your time; but if you bring back the goods, why—" the Chief paused and slapped his hip-pocket.

"I guess we can make it all right with you."

Did he know the Craig-Bulkeley affair? Did he? The office went black before the eyes of the Society-editor, and through the window where he, ordinarily, saw a brewery and a steam laundry with an unusually large chimney, there now passed in orderly procession before his brain-plates an unmortgaged house, and a yacht, and pairs of shoes, barrels of pairs.

It had been pretty nearly of international interest when Craig-Bulkeley of the Exchange, a dozen clubs, and a few others, had married. Even a Society-editor had failed to get within the pale, had been balked when he tried to cross the threshold of the wonderful functions that followed. There had been occasional glimpses of the girl as her sweet, proud face glowed from a taxi in the glimmer of the Avenue. Her

gowns and her jewels seen from the box at the opera had made good copy, and beside her, always, had been the great, glorious figure of Craig-Bulkeley. Money, money, and love! Could anything further be asked, or desired? Then came the crash. The great house was closed, indefinitely. Craig-Bulkeley ignored some important operations on 'change and sailed in two days' time, while Mrs. Craig-Bulkeley—ah—that was the mystery.

Here stood Scandal, the elusive, the coy, at the Society-editor's right hand. It shouldn't matter that he was unpractised at the game. Given the chance, he could play it. He could wring the girl dry. The debt was about to be paid. The story should be a corker.

The Society-editor packed his grip and took passage for an island Junkaport. He made inquiries at Mackerel Cove, where the boat stopped, and here he was under the same roof as Mrs. Craig-Bulkeley, waiting in the wooden rocking-chair for her to come down.

It was a very low-ceilinged room, with nothing on the board floor but a rag rug. There was an old fish-net hung on the wall, and the Society-editor had noticed, as he came up the narrow front walk which led to the queer little low, gray house, that the path was bordered with clam shells. So he judged that a fisherman had lived there, some time, perhaps he lived there still. The Society-editor had never been in such a singularly barren room. Over the fire-board, framed in kelp and seaweed, there was hung a sort of register of skippers who had been lost at sea. The Society-editor was just thinking of going over to read off the names, when the door opened and Mrs. Craig-Bulkeley came in.

She stood framed in the low doorway a second, with her head thrown back very far—like some sort of an animal caught at bay. Then she came inside. She wore a yellow oilskin coat that was wet with the sea, and her yellow hair, too, was so wet that it made its escape from the black ribbon that bound it and curled in quaint ringlets about her forehead and neck. She looked the stature of a child, and her face was very wistful

and appealing, but the Society-editor didn't notice any of these things. It was her eyes that he saw first—only her eyes. He couldn't describe them. He tried, afterwards, to remember the color, but he wasn't sure, for the life of him, if they were blue or brown. It was only the way they looked—as if they were seeing things that *you* couldn't see. The Society-editor had dabbled in psychics, once, before he married, and he remembered seeing this same expression in the eyes of mediums when they are first released from a trance. It was a look of experience beyond *your* ken, and of surprise at *your* ignorance.

She came forward a few steps, wrapping the dripping oilskin about her slim, girlish figure, as if to shut out the unwarranted intrusion. Then she threw her head back still farther, as she turned her great eyes full on the Society-editor, and spoke.

"They told me at the wharf, when we were pulling in, that you had come. News travels fast in Junkaport."

She paused a moment and put one hand up to her throat. Then she caught her breath and went on.

"What do you wish me to say?"

The Society-editor rose, hat in hand, as if to apologize for his presence. Then he remembered his errand.

"What the Paper wants is the truth," he began pompously, and after the first lie, the others came more easily.

"We wish to do you and your husband no harm, madam," it seemed absurd so to address the little creature before him, but he went on, "still, you are both persons of importance in the life of the City and the public demands, since your whereabouts has been discovered," he was really getting into the game, "it demands to know the reason for this—separation."

He was still standing, respectfully, but Mrs. Craig-Bulkeley motioned that he should be seated again. Then she sat down, cross-legged, on the floor, her knees hugged close up to her chin, and those strange eyes of hers looking—not at him, now, but beyond.

"I dreamed it first when I was a little girl—" she began.



The door opened and Mrs. Craig-Bulkeley came in

"No, I am not mad." The Society-editor started as she began to speak. "I am simply telling you the truth that you wished to know," she went on.

"There was a long, winding road, always. It was sandy and the rocks were so sharp that no wagon could pass. One must always walk the road, but I never minded, for I am so anxious to reach the end. At first there was nothing to see but the cliffs on one side and the sea on the other, and the great wild roses close by the road that smelled so sweet. After a while I saw the House. At first it was only a speck against the sky, but I ran when I saw it, and so it grew larger. It was a low, gray House—all gray—except just one door, and that was green. When I reached it I was panting and out of breath from running, and I tried very hard to open the door, but I never could because it was locked. Then a face came at the window and someone beckoned to me. The child that was I thought it was a fairy child inside—a fairy of the sea, who would be imprisoned until I set her free. But I could not open the door, no matter how hard I tried. And I awoke, tired and crying.

"I never told anyone about the dream, but all through the little girl days I looked for the House, and I never found it.

"Then—Craig asked me to marry him, and I was very happy. I forgot all about the House, but the night before my wedding-day the dream came again. I went the long way up the sandy road, and I tried to open the door, but it was still locked. There was another face at the window—the face of a girl, and I thought I could hear her calling as she beckoned to me—and I woke sobbing, and my arms ached.

"I don't know whether I can make you understand about the thing that happened afterward—after I married. We were so absurdly happy for a while, Craig and I, and then—I don't know how to explain it quite, but the happiness seemed too great for us to share, and it crept in between us, like a wall, and began to push us apart. Life was so wonderfully full that we lost each other in the fullness. Because we each had so

much to think of, we drifted apart—we quarreled, once—and, then—"

She buried her face in her hands a second.

"There were other—quarrels.

"Craig took to staying nights at the club—and they said—"

She paused, and lifted her head again, and went on—

"It was just a month ago that it happened. I was alone in my room, but I am quite sure that I hadn't slept. I was listening for the night-key, if Craig should come in. I think I was sitting up in bed—I couldn't have been asleep, could I?—and I was cold, so I was just thinking of ringing for Clairice and coals when I saw a woman's face at the window. Only for a second was it there, beckoning to me with one hand, and then it faded into the night. I wasn't in the least frightened. It was a face I had seen before, somewhere, and I lay down, and tried so hard to think where. Then, when it must have been almost morning, I remembered that it was the face of the girl in my dream House, only grown older. And I knew that I must leave Craig and find the House, and open the door, and speak to her.

"I hadn't an idea where to go, but I was so unhappy that I wanted, first, to find the farthest away sort of place, and just think—and then I would start on my search.

"Craig's old room-mate at Yale had told us of this queer little fishing island where almost nobody comes, and never a woman, because it is so lonely. So I came to Junkaport.

"We were two days out and there was a fog all the way. When the little steamer entered the Cove and anchored at the old fishhouse wharf and I climbed up the mossy steps, I couldn't see a thing but the fishermen, and the nets, and the piles of lobster traps. But I asked them if there was a woman on the island who would take me in for the night, and one old skipper said—'Yes, he 'lowed the Cap'n's widow would. She lived on top the hill, but it was pretty rough haulin'.' I'd have to walk it. So I started the way he pointed.

"It was a rough road. There were

rocks all the way—you know, for you came that way this morning—but I liked it with the boom of the surf in my ears and a soft scent like roses coming up through the grayness. Then the fog lifted. Did you see how it goes in a minute, as if a great hand had picked it up and crushed it in a bundle and tossed it out to sea? I watched it go until there was not a scrap of it left on the waves, and afterward I looked in front of me at the end of the road. Then I lost my breath, and my limbs nearly gave out beneath me. My dream House stood at the top of the hill where the fog had been hiding it, a little gray house with a winding, sandy path in front, and the closed green door.

"Would the door open?"

"I trembled as I ran and grasped it, but someone from the inside lifted the latch, and the door opened wide, and the Cap'n's widow let me in just as if she had been expecting me.

"She never asked me why I came. She was only very, very kind to me. We had supper together, a simple meal of the fish she had brought in that day—she went out in the dory every day in the year, she told me—and a bowl of dusky purple berries with cream. Then, after supper, she showed me my room, just a bit of a cottage loft, it was, with a tiny cot and a patchwork quilt; but, ah, the window! Only the sea to look at—nothing else. And sometimes it sang like a mother rocking a child to sleep, and sometimes it was angry, and ships crunched against the rocks, but always it was wonderful—wonderful.

"When morning came, I heard her stirring before daybreak, so I dressed and followed her down the road to the sea. She was a little, slight thing. She looked like me, I thought. But she could handle a boat as well as any man. She put me in the bow, and we started out with the surf beating our faces, and the sun riding ahead of us in a path of gold on the water. Before we came in, she had taught me to reef a sail, and hold a grapple, and steer, and we had the dory bottom full of gleaming, dripping cod. There wasn't a fisherman on the island could haul like the Cap'n's widow.

"We fished, and listened to the sea, and slept for days. I never told the Cap'n's widow who she was; how she had been the fairy child at the window beckoning to me so long ago; and then the young girl who called me; and last of all, how she had come to the City and made me follow her back to the sea. I thought she must understand all this by the way she had taken me in, as if she had been waiting for me.

"But one day, when there was a storm and we dared not go out, she was sitting in that chair where you are, and I was on the floor at her feet. She took my hand and laid it, so, on her knee, and touched my rings with her strong fingers.

"'Where's your man, lassie?' she asked. 'Wont he be missing you all these days?'

"'I don't know where he is,' I said, and I laid my head down in her lap.

"For a while she did not speak. She only stroked my hair very gently.

"'Sometimes I didn't know where mine was,' she began, 'and so I thought he didn't love me. I thought first I was always going to wear my pretty dresses, and potter with the flowers in the garden. When he brought in a load of fish, I used to run away, and beg him not to clean them by the doorstep, and I wouldn't let him bring the nets home, or the traps, for fear he'd drop them on my posies. When he wanted to smoke his pipe of an evening, I said it choked me, so he took to going to the tavern with his pipe, and down on the wharf with the nets.

"'One night he didn't come home at all. It was a wild night, the like of which you've never seen, for it was high tide and the surf was beating up higher than the fish house. I thought my man was still in the tavern, where he went after supper, sleeping over his beer, but when it came daylight, and the sun shone out bright, the way it does after a storm—they brought the Cap'n up to me wrapped in a piece of sail. He'd been out and in all night bringin' folks from a wrecked schooner, but the last time, it was the tide brought him in. I knew then how much I'd loved the Cap'n, when he was dead. And I knew how I'd



"Seen the Cap'n's widow 'round here?" he asked

been at fault, and I'd have given my life to begin all over again. A man's way aint a woman's way, lassie. And she's got to learn that.'

"Maybe she said more. I think she did—something about how the Cap'n's dory came ashore and the skippers mended it so she could fish with it, and she'd been doing the Cap'n's work ever since—but I didn't hear much of that. There was so much for me to think of, all at once.

"Suppose I shouldn't ever see Craig again. Suppose he'd gone down with the tide, because I hadn't been patient enough?

"'A man's way isn't a woman's—'

"'A man's way isn't a woman's.'

"Whatever Craig had done shouldn't matter, if only I could see him again. I wanted him, body and soul—to touch, to feel, to hold.

"I saw, now, how I never had really loved Craig, before, but this woman—"

Mrs. Craig-Bulkeley rose as she finished.

"Who had been waiting so long behind the locked door, had told me what love really is—just patience."

The Society-editor rose, too. He had almost forgotten where he was, but he saw the room again, and the old net that hung on the wall, and the little child-woman by his side.

"I don't think there is anything more to tell you," she said simply. "I couldn't explain my—unusual conduct—without saying all this."

"I am sure you have told me all that the Paper needs, madam," the Society-editor said with dignity, as he bowed his way out the door.

But Mrs. Craig-Bulkeley followed him, and laid a hand on his arm.

"You'll very likely meet her coming up the hill," she said. "I left her in the fish house, but she must be through weighing the fish now, and I want you to know her. If you meet her on the road, just stop and speak to the Cap'n's widow, wont you? She's been so good to me."

Yes, the Society-editor would, but his Society-toughened nerve cells were so agitated by the interview that he never gave the matter a second thought. He planned the head lines first. Should it be "First Glimpse of Runaway Bride?"

He was about decided it should be, when he brought up suddenly in front of the postoffice and a telephone sign. He looked at the sign for several minutes, marveling at its unexpectedness; then he went in and wrote out a telegram to the Chief.

It was brief. It said:

Nothing doing on Craig-Bulkeley assignment. Sorry.

After the Society-editor had paid for its transmission, he carefully counted the remains of his check. There was just enough left to get him back to Jersey.

It was when he reached the wharf and was waiting for the steamer that he remembered Mrs. Craig-Bulkeley's hospitable little request, and he also remembered that he hadn't met a woman on the road, nor was there any woman, apparently, in the fish house. There was an old lobster man sitting on the wharf steps, so the Society-editor accosted him.

"Seen the Cap'n's widow 'round here?" he asked, jovially.

"The Cap'n's widow?" the lobster man asked, dumping his pipe into the sea, and looking incredulous.

"Yes, the Cap'n's widow," said the Society-Editor impatiently, for the steamer had just docked, "the woman who lives in the house on the top of the hill."

"Oh," said the lobster man intelligently, as he rammed the pipe full again

and prepared to light it. "She aint no widow. Leastways, we don't know as how she is," he said, chuckling. "She's a loidy from the city what has took the house. It's stood empty for years until she come. Dunno what she wants with it, an' dunno neither what she stays out in a boat so much fur, alone, just cruisin' round. She lives alone, too, stranger, up there in the house with the green door."

As the boat rounded the Cove and made for the sea, the Society-editor had a last glimpse of her. The house stood so high that it was easily seen a long while after the wharf was lost. She was standing outside, still wearing the oilskin and her hair wind-blown about her face—a patch of yellow sunlight, she looked, blotched against the green door.

It was Hemstreet who got the real story. The ex-Society-editor read the account from his mortgaged piazza out in Jersey. The Paper could positively state that the Craig-Bulkeleys were still at Junkaport, Maine, where Mrs. Craig-Bulkeley had been joined by Mr. Craig-Bulkeley shortly after she had left town so suddenly. It was reported that Mrs. Craig-Bulkeley was suffering from a slight nervous breakdown, but was recovering rapidly. It was expected that she would soon be able to return to New York and resume her social duties.

The ex-Society-editor smiled as he read. He had plenty of time to smile, now that he was released from the clutches of bridge, and it gave him unbounded satisfaction to realize that to him, and to him alone, would belong through all the years the original glory of the Craig-Bulkeley assignment.

Sarah Mariar's Great Idea

BY CEYLON E. HOLLINGSWORTH

ILLUSTRATED BY IRMA DEREMEAUX

IN that gently rolling farm-land of North Eastern Ohio—the old Western Reserve of Connecticut—where the farmers, their wives and necessarily

their children are all direct descendants of the first pioneers, and still live where their great-grandfathers housed-up when Spotted George was killed; where they

treasure the traditions of the wilderness and preserve in daily use the comparisons and idioms of the Revolution; where they still call a man a Hessian and tell him to go to Halifax if they fall out with him, you will find North Tauton, eight miles from a railroad. And in North Tauton you will find Sarah Mariar Gardner, and I've got to get right down to business and talk with grammar that's not and in sentences that wont diagram because there isn't nobody that can use any other language, somehow, and bring up Sarah Mariar properly before the mind. Not that Sarah Mariar is not educated, though.

Sarah Mariar was twenty-five lately and is a good girl. Her paw owns the wagon-shop and works forty acres and wears white whiskers with a smooth upper-lip. Her maw wears a bonnet Sundays that ties under her chin—her mother's—but Sarah Mariar dresses more modern and is up to date mentally. She's ambitious and in these days of rural free delivery has all kinds of reading matter and keeps posted on the suffragette movement, in particular. She knew she wasn't likely to get married because her paw hasn't much, and she wasn't overly good-looking, face and figure.

"Once-one-is-one," some of the mean fellows around Heckler's store nights called her because, they said, while, of course, she had a figure, it was a figure "1" about 5 feet 8 inches tall.

Sarah Mariar's face is intellectual and strong particular with features. She's romantic in her ideas and has always longed to do good to people, and she does do lots of good and always has ever since she was a little girl. Sarah Mariar's a strong-minded woman. But I don't want to set you against her, because she's a good, tender-hearted girl and I saw her cry once, one morning, and my heart ached for her. But it would ached harder in the dark. She didn't hold her handkerchief to her face and talked while she cried, and seeing a strong-minded woman cry this way is something fierce.

"Oh, mother!" says Sarah Mariar one evening last June, to her maw while they

were darning by the dining-room lamp, "this life of mine is so futile, so blank, so drear. I yearn so to let myself out in some way and do something worth while to better the world and let folks know how I long to do some humble little thing, even, to better the world. Just see the suffragettes over in London, how they are waging war against oppression and going to jail like martyrs. Oh, mother, how glorious it must be to raise up our sex like that and suffer and have people know you suffer and be sorry for you. Oh, why wasn't we all born in London."

"Sarah Mariar, it's wicked to question th' Good Lord what he does," says her maw piously. "Our sect is our sect, where ever we be, I reckon. I'd never hold my head up ag'in if you wuz t' be took up here in North Tauton, an' neither 'uld you, Sarah Mariar, an' it's no worse goin' t' th' lock-up right here than in London."

"Oh, mother," says Sarah Mariar, "you don't understand what I mean and it's so hard to yearn so and not be understood."

"Yes, I do *jis'* understan' what you mean," says her maw biting at an end of darning cotton and mumbling her words emphatically. "D'ye think I've never hed no yearnin's? Jis' because I've done th' work th' Lord give me t' do, make a home for yer paw an' you young ones an' never said nothin' about yearnin's? Sarah Mariar, jis' look about right here t' home an' pray an' there'll be a plenty t' do t' raise up the sect an' better th' world."

This here talk of her maw's did Sarah Mariar good. It set her to thinking and took her mind off London and put it on North Tauton. She didn't have nothing more to say much and was thoughtful and went to bed thoughtful. She was hunting out some way to do good to her sex right here in North Tauton.

She laid and tossed till most twelve and when Sarah Mariar's mind got after anything that way something had to come, and about twelve it come. She would do something far nobler, far more unselfisher than uplifting her own sex. She would uplift the other sex.



When the misspelled sign was set up they all read it

She sat right up in bed with the beautiful grandure of the idea. Women needed no uplifting. They was captives of men, it is true, but Christians who are captured by savages don't start in to uplift themselves when they find they can't escape like women can't escape from men. No, good Christians, then, become missionaries and try to uplift the savages.

Sarah Mariar arose in the morning with her frame beating with the zealous fever of the great work. She saw glory and fame ahead of her like Susan B's or Wesley's. Her eyes was bright and stern.

She didn't say nothing to her maw about it nor to her paw when he was eating his breakfast, although she looked at him and then out the windows, thoughtful and far-away-like, pretty often, as if she'd a notion to begin on him; but there was something about the

set of her paw's big upper lip that made him look too heavy for uplifting.

Sarah Mariar was undecided whether to start out like a lone missionary and begin uplifting the men, one at a time, single-handed, or call a meeting of women and organize a wider movement. She set her mind on the problem all morning, and while she and her maw was taking up dinner it come; and she set down the potatoes and caught her breath with the beautiful grandure of the idea.

She'd call a meeting of the men. She would call it with the call that never fails to assemble the men. She would invite a dozen of the foremost to supper some evening—the dining-table would set a dozen—and just lay herself out on that supper and not begin on their uplifting until they was eating the floating-island. Sarah Mariar was long on floating-island and cocoanut-cake.

The next morning, though, Sarah Mariar give up the idea of inviting the menfolks. Her eye lost its brightness and was yearning again. Just *seeing* her paw without saying anything to him about it had set her to thinking and showed her it was no use inviting the menfolks. Their wives wouldn't be jealous, of course, but she knew they wouldn't come and see her afterwards and say: "Oh, Sarah Mariar, how can we ever thank you for what yer a-doin' fer our husbands!" And she knew they wouldn't say prayerfully to their husbands when they come home from the supper and tell about it: "Oh, how glad we be Sarah Mariar hez started in up-liftin' you!" No, Sarah Mariar knew them all and knew what they would say. "Fer th' lan's sakes!" they would say, "she's gone clean crazy!"

Life was very drear to Sarah Mariar again.

So she and her maw worked all morning: cleaned up the breakfast-dishes and the house, which the yesterday had mussed some and dusted, then straightened up so that the to-day could muss and dusty it over again. They made up the beds so that the going to bed to-night could muss them up again. Then the rest of the morning they worked getting dinner, and Sarah Mariar at dinner see her paw take ten minutes and wipe her morning's work out of existence and set her at the job of washing dishes and getting supper. And about six P. M. she see him take ten minutes and turn her afternoon into a parcel of dirty supper-dishes to wash and put away for getting breakfast with. And about 7:30 her paw he goes to bed to sleep sound and healthy like a farmer should because his crops is growing while he sleeps.

"But," thinks Sarah Mariar, "all that grows for maw and me while we sleep is another day's work. Paw has the joy of seeing his crops and stock grow, and of reaping the fields and storing in the barn, and of selling the crops and of getting the money and putting it in a long pocket-book inside his vest. All we get out of it is seeing him do it."

After her paw and maw went to bed

Sarah Mariar sat out on the front steps and thought.

The night breeze was warm-cool like the spring-house on a hot day. The trees rustled cool and pleasant. The June stars was out. The night was beautiful. Sarah Mariar sat perfectly still with her chin on her hands and looked off at the stars for a long while without moving; and no one can look at the stars this way for a long while and not get full of stars. For stars are hope. And stars are the world outside of North Tauton. And all the stars above look like heaven even if the astronomers tells us they are not, and she got the help of heaven from them; not resignation—the heaps of Babylon are resignation—but energy, renewed determination to do something, the joyous confidence not only that she *could* but that she *would*, and that Heaven would bring her the something to do which would satisfy her impulses.

She sat there a long while after Heaven had talked to her, and while she thus sat at least seven big autos whirled past, one at a time now and then, some coming from Cleveland on their way down the rich and populous Mahoning Valley, some going to Cleveland. North Tauton is on the great auto-highway that leads from Pittsburg through a hundred miles of steel wealth to Cleveland and all through the day and far into the night dusty, thirsty cars are speeding over the main road in front of the house.

All at once it come—the idea to Sarah Mariar. It come and spread all over her in a hot glow and released the real Sarah Mariar that had been longing and learning and grasping, all shut up and hidden from sight within the visible North Tauton Sarah Mariar. She sat there and planned it all out and it was nigh midnight when she went to bed. She was happy. It would take some money; but she had saved up a hundred dollars sewing. It would take strong-mindedness with her paw. But in this case she was stronger-minded than her paw and maw together.

It took the strong-mindedness. For two days her paw and maw, particularly her paw was agitated terrible. And then

in about a week the whole town—North Tauton has about fifteen families in and about it—was agitated terrible.

One evening they all rushed to their doors and see Sarah Mariar's paw driving in from Warren with a large refrigerator in the grain wagon—"Be th' Gardners gone clean crazy?"—and a huge white sign, also, with black and red lettering some misspelled.

Neighbor men hurried over to help him unload and neighbor women with their eyes hanging out with curiosity came over and watched and visited with Sarah Mariar and her maw.

When the sign—it was twelve feet by six—was set up against the side of the house they all read it and more folks coming in read it.

It said:

THE HOMLIEST GIRL
IN TRUMEULL COUNTY
SELLS

GLASSES OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BUT-
TERMILK IN THE STATE, COLD
AS AN ICEBERG!
SINCERITY APPLE PIE AND CREAM.
NEAR THE ICE ALWAYS.

CHICKENS IN THE BARNYARD AND AN
HOUR; HAM IN THE SMOKE-HOUSE
AND THIRTY MINUTES, AND THE
LEAST BIT OF TIME BEHIND THESE
COUNTRY PALINGS AND OLD-FASH-
IONED, COUNTRY COMFORT!

Stumped?

No, the kind neighbors as they read were worse than stumped.

"Why, heaven help th' poor thing, it don't make any sense," they whispered to one another aghast—the women folks. "An', of all things, who's t' buy her butter-milk an' pie with all of us feedin' it t' th' pigs and makin' pie as good as hern."

And then, like kind, good souls, they went in to Sarah Mariar, with long, compassionate faces that tried to bear up and be cheerful and set out to show her how she must be clean crazy, and do her good.

"Why, Sarah Mariar, dear," says Mrs. Selby, "don't you know, girl, that while we would all love t' buy all our stuff from you, and all will be glad t' patronize y' some, of course, fer friendship's sake, that y' can't expect t' get much custom

from North Tauton? An' I, fer one, Sarah Mariar, think y' ought t' be told plain b'fore y' go t' enny more expense."

The new and real Sarah Mariar was busy over the stove frying potatoes, and she stopped and turned around with a thunder-struck expression which Mrs. Selby and the other neighbor women thought was Fond Hope staggering back under their kind blow.

Then Sarah Mariar burst into a light, merry laugh and turned again to her spider of potatoes.

"And do you think," says she, "that the object of that sign is to solicit patronage from you people? I never thought of that."

The neighbor women starched up and looked at one another.

"Well," says Mrs. Selby, handing her words over as if they were coals of fire she was placing on Sarah Mariar's head with a pair of tongs, "I'm sure our money's 's good as ennybody's, an' every little helps, even if we do offer it out of a sense of kindness, an' 's not t' be sneezed at. You must r'member, Sarah Mariar, that Pride goes b'fore a Fall."

"Why, bless yer heart, Mis' Selby," says Maw Gardner, with the firm voice of Christian rebuke, "it's th' automo-beelists she's got that sign fer."

"Oh," says they, wilting down.

And then, after some sweetly meek questions, departed and spread the news.

Wag?

Tongues?

Never see the beat the way North Tauton buzzed that night and prophesied and jeered and laughed to itself. Sarah Mariar's paw and maw knowed how folks would talk and was so mortified they could hardly hold their heads up, thinking about it. But Sarah Mariar she was serene and happy.

The next morning Paw Gardner, with the help of a couple of neighbor men, began putting up the corrected sign on posts in the front yard, where every one could read as they flew by in autos. They had a shifting audience of men and boys and some women in sun-bonnets, who helped with remarks of advice and made fun in whispers amongst themselves.



"Are you the homeliest girl in Trumbull County?"

"Poor fools! They wont sell enough in a year t' pay fer th' sign."

And then they laughed under their breaths at some of the first spellin' mistakes and felt good.

Not all of them, tho'.

Along about noon he had it all up and more people was gathering to look at it and pity Sarah Mariar, when along comes a big car sailing by. It was full of linen coats and veils and caps and was as dusty as a desert.

It sailed by like the wind.

"He, he!" says Mrs. Selby, laughing behind her hand to Mrs. Hall, who was standing beside her. "That's th' way they stop. I'd feel so ashamed if I wuz th' Gardners."

Then she looked agreeably after the auto. It had halted sudden and was turning around. She stopped laughing and watched. It came back quick and pulled up right in their midst before the front gate.

The folks in it read the sign and laughed.

"How long will it take to get us up a chicken dinner?" called the chauffeur.

He was a portly, red faced man, and he licked his lips after he spoke and looked wistfully cheerful and hopeful at Sarah Mariar's paw, who was standing in the delightful coolness and coseyness of the cottage steps.

"Sarah Mariar," called her paw.

And Sarah Mariar came through the front door and walked out front as if she had been raised among automobiles all her life.

The North Tauton folks gasped. They could hardly recognize her. Some of the North Tauton women felt swords run into their souls.

She had a dainty cap on her head, like a nurse's. Her dark hair was combed beautiful in the latest style. Her figure "1" was a figure "1" no more in a white gown that fit her with artistic neatness and simplicity, and she looked as if she was some one visiting the Gardners from a large city. The skirt was short enough to show a pair of high-heeled tan oxfords and slim, rounded, tan ankles with flesh showing through, the likes of all which North Tauton had never sported

before. Her eyes were bright and dark and jolly, her lacey apron and its shoulder straps was beautiful.

"Gosh," whispered one of the mean fellows of the Heckler's-store crowd, "I'm goin' t' take her out b'hind th' four-year old t'night."

The red faced man and the two other men in the auto looked at her, eager-like, with grins, a-satisfying their curiosity, I suppose, about "the homeliest girl," and the auto women—three of them—looked, too, mighty close.

"We get out here," shouted the red-faced man to the others, just as soon as he'd drunk Sarah Mariar in fer a second, and he piled out.

Sarah Mariar was all he needed to know about the dinner.

When Sarah Mariar came smiling out the gate and gracefully greeted them, he tipped his hat clean down to his waist and held it there and says:

"Are *you* the 'the homeliest girl in Trumbull county?'"

"Guilty, your honor," she laughed, in a full, contralto voice.

The North Tauton folks hung their eyes on her in wonder. It was her voice, only this was the first time it had ever been in tune. She was easiness and self-possession all through. She didn't mind the North Tauton folks any at all.

"If the rest of your announcement," grins the man, putting on his cap with another bow, "is as happily misleading as the first line, it will not be long till you'll have to build a hotel here. What can you serve us?"

"Well," says Sarah Mariar's rich voice, just as if Tauton folks was not gaping around like numbskulls, "a half spring chicken fried each, with cream—real cream—dressing, hot biscuits, maple syrup, creamed potatoes, apple pie, deep, thorough coffee, pickles, cheese—"

"Hush, daughter!" says the man suddenly overflowing with great friendliness and emotion. "Do you want to drive me frantic? Get busy, do! I suppose you can provide us with toilet conveniences for getting the dust from our eyes?"

"Every convenience," laughs Sarah Mariar. "I shall have to charge you seventy-five cents a plate, though," she

added, with a mite of tremor in her voice.

And all the North Tauton folks held their breath. The price was scandalous. They raised their expressions into expectation and waited to see the auto people, snort, pile back in, and ride away as if from a pestilence. They knew that's what *they* would do their own selves.

"If it's half as good as it sounds," boomed the red-faced man, "I'll give you a dollar."

All the North Tauton folks held their breath, while the idea of six dollars at one whack whacked its way into their skulls, and then they scattered for home as if they had sudden business there. And they had—the business of

thrashing out plans for going into the buttermilk business.

Sarah Mariar's paw was plumb beat and he killed four chickens like a man in a dream. And her maw was all in a fluster, but Sarah Mariar was cooler, quicker, surer, than they had ever seen her. Her maw just wanted to stand to one side and stare in heavenly amazement at her. But with a word here and a word there, she kept her paw humping himself and her maw on the trot.

The large dining-room, with its three morning-gloried windows, was cool and perfumed with the least hint of wood-smoke odors. The way them folks et was beautiful, and laughed and talked. When she moved the ravaged pie-plates, Sarah



"You must remember, Sarah M'riar, that pride goes before a fall!"

Mariar set a tiny glass sauce dish with six matches in it before each man and told them to smoke if they wanted to.

Sarah Mariar's paw and maw, specially her maw, was scandalized out in the kitchen.

"They'll jis' think we're runnin' a saloon," whispers her maw, almost crying.

But the men folks in the dining-room said "Hah!" enthusiastic like, and hustled cigars from their pockets and lit up and sat back in mighty comfort and smoked.

Ought to hear them folks talk to each other and run down country-hotels and congratulate themselves on finding Sarah Mariar.

They see her paw's huge, yellow-painted barn through the windows and an idea hits the chauffeur. They planned a barn dance for the next week. Sarah Mariar was to get up a dinner like this for forty, including musicians, and get the big barn floor ready and lit up with Chinese lanterns, and all such.

The red-faced man hunted her up in the kitchen and asked her could she?

The way Sarah Mariar said "Yes" made the red-faced man say "Bully!"

"Have you a telephone?" says the man.

"No," says Sarah Mariar, scaring her paw and maw, "but I shall have one as soon as possible."

"Then give me your card and I'll drop you a line to-morrow, giving the date," says the man.

And when they left, leaving a V and I for her paw and maw to stare at, all arrangements for the dance had been made, and the price they was going to pay kept Maw Gardner awake half the night.

That afternoon she served buttermilk to three car-loads that the sign lassoed, and about 7 o'clock a ham-and-egg supper to four men who sat and smoked likewise and talked about Sarah Mariar.

And so her fame began to spread and it spread for hundreds of miles, and the abject, home-scrawled, buttermilk and chicken signs which in a few days had sprung up like magic in North Tauton front yards only did what imitations al-

ways do, they just boomed the original.

My wife censors my stories by divine right. When she had read this one so far, she wore a discontented look. She began to employ her prerogative.

"It is not only inconsistent and disappointing, but it is positively deceptive, like a patent-medicine ad. hiding under a news head. You start out to make fun of Sara Marie. You establish the idea at once that she is a yokeless and the reader prepares for some ridiculous 'coming off' to the story but instead you lead into a Ways to Make Money article. Just compare this latter portion with where you poke fun at seeing her cry. Who could associate your strong-minded boo-hooer with the trim, up-to-date girl who suddenly emerges into the world of that sign?"

"Nobody," I admitted, "but you must blame the world of the sign for that."

"Sara Marie is not homely and you know it," declared my wife, taking a dictatorial tangent.

"And again," continued my wife, fingering the manuscript slightly in a way I don't approve, "it seems cold-blooded and mercenary to send Marie adrift as soon as she sees money ahead, and you fail to gratify the reader, at that, when you know she cleared over \$400 in July. Anyway, you should have worked a little romance into it at the end."

"How can I? She only erected the sign this June."

"You couldn't gossip a bit, I suppose," she said, sarcastically, "about that Youngstown lawyer who takes a party up there about twice a week. You know he always takes three couples and depends for the fourth on the accession of Marie after he arrives. He goes right out into the kitchen and helps her with the dinner every time, as much at home as if he were one of the family, and you know it. He has taken Pa Gardner to Cleveland in his car, and Marie, too, and they are practically engaged, and you know that."

"I know a whole lot," I growled as I took the manuscript from my wife and sat down before the typewriter to make her additions.



Zaraldie

The Breaks of Caney

BY EMMA BELL MILES

Author of "Maliard Plumage," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY HERMANN C. WALL

THE house smelt like a tar-kiln from the billet of pitch-pine that blazed on a rack of two iron strips driven into the wall. The log next above was half charred away from having many times caught fire. The whole bare wall was richly darkened with smoke; goblin tags of soot depended from a ridgepole inaccessible to the sedge-grass broom. A freezing rain drummed on the cabin roof; the sword-song of the wind over the chimney was mocked by the joyous roar of the fire. Drops falling made little explosions in the embers and tinkled on the lid of the bubbling pot.

Dad Farris, for once perfectly sober, was basking in the warmth and radiance, and Orphy turned to him her steady eyes and good brown face all alight with eagerness. She had chosen this evening to discuss with him and Zaraldie and Man her project of seeking work in town.

The younger sister was seated on an oaken block directly in the rich light, a

creature small and lovely like a bird, with dark curls falling on the rose-velvet of oval cheeks. Orphy, coming to stand behind the block, drew Zaraldie's hands back and held them so in a half-unconscious clasp.

"Looks to me," she said, "hit's the only way. We've tried our best to all stay together and at home, but ever' year gits harder."

"Hit's a long ways to the Settlemint," objected Man, from the shadowed corner where he had curled himself on a sheepskin. He was entering his teens, but was still "Little Man," having been christened "Jesse Edward" too late to oust his milk-name.

"Hit is so," agreed Orphy, swinging gently the hands she held. "But when there's only one thing to be done, why, there aint but one thing *toe* be done, and no multiplyin' words—"

"Why, howdy!"

They turned as the door swung wide,

letting in a great gust of chill and storm. It was only Bud, the elder brother, come home for over Sunday; the plashing of the eaves had covered his approach. He walked in without greeting, threw a sack of provisions into a corner, and spread his hands to the blaze. When he became warm he drew a plug of tobacco from his pocket.

"Here, dad—and there's shorts and potatoes, and a middlin' o' meat, in the sack. But that'll hafta do you'ns, now, until next week," he warned them, glancing round.

"'Taint nigh as easy livin' somehow as hit used to be here," complained the old man.

"That's why I feel obleeged to make a new shift," Orphy reopened the subject for Bud's benefit. "We got to look further away for a livin'."

"I don't see how us folks 'll git on without ye here, Orphy—let alone Prentice Roark," said Bud, covering a deal of affection with a jest.

For the first time a quick shade of impatience crossed the face of the older girl.

"I don't care for you-all knowin' here and now," she cried, "that Prentice Roark's one main reason why I aim to leave here the first day I can git ready to go."

They looked at her, standing proud and sweet in her warm youth and womanhood, daring the known and the unknown together, and they turned their gaze to the fire again, helplessly.

Orphy began to set the table for supper.

"Hit's strange she never has liked Prent Roark like the rest of us do," said Zaraldie, a week from that evening, after all farewells were said and their sister had adventured forth. "But ne'er a one of our folks ever wanted to leave home, either, did they, Dad?"

"Your Uncle Ed," the old man reminded her. "He's West som'er's."

"Prent he jist bothers her; he's bound'-determinated for her to have him," explained Bud. "Well, hit a-goin' to be hard a-gittin' along without her, but I don't believe she'll stay no longer'n the water gits hot."

He took the trail to the valley farm, where he worked for a weekly portion of provisions and his board, and Zaraldie bravely assumed her sister's duties at home.

After a few days of it she cried to her father, sitting futile though sympathetic in his place:

"Well, dad, if Orphy had sech a time as this—"

"She did; ye nee'n'to think otherwise," he replied. "You know, she had you two chaps besides, at first; your mother left Jess'-Ed'ard a baby in arms."

He bent forward, trying to assist in the rescue of the dinner, which the pot had turned out on the hearth.

"Why, here comes Prentice to fill up ol' Tiger!"

Old Tiger sat in state on the fireboard, a sleek and shining presence, and young Roark was wont to see to his plenishing. Prentice's clear and merry gray eyes recommended him to the lads, and this week he won a welcome by saying, as he helped to set up the pot:

"Well, I seed Orphy when I was in the Settlement yesterday. She's workin' for Dr. Lewis' wife—housework and cookin'. She hoped you-uns was well, and aims to come out and see ye whenever she can git away."

Zaraldie took the apparent message at face value, though she might have guessed that whatever Orphy had to send them of help or cheer would come through the far off mountain postoffice. But it was quite true that Prentice had not permitted the girl of his choice to escape him by merely going to town.

"I've got business thar pretty frequently," said he.

His confidence in the discretion of these friends was such that he did not mind their unavoidable suspicion that his business was in the interests of a still concealed under the breaks of Caney.

He continued a frequent visitor at the cabin, but what with bad weather, manifold duties, and the heavy winter roads, it was near New Year before her household saw Orphy again.

She came to them at last like a mother bird, bringing in a basket the substance of a holiday feast.

"But what makes ye look so worried, Orphy?" demanded Bud.

"I'm a-studyin' about you-uns," she answered. "Man looks peakid to me."

"Why, he's been well all along," said Dad. And the boy supplemented gruffly, "Aw, I aint sick."

"Well, another thing's worse, and that's Prentice Roark. He's been a-comin' too often."

"Not often enough," cried the owner of Tiger in sheer bravado.

Orphy, not wishing to spoil anybody's appetite, said no more at the time, but once abed the sisters talked it over.

"Bud spoke to Prentice," admitted Zaraldie, "and he laughed and 'lowed that so long as Dad's got obleeged to have liquor, hit mought as well be from his hand as anybody's. I think myself that's about the rights of hit. He—he—brung me a right pretty pin from the store a-Christmas, and I didn't want to take hit. He told me that he was aimin' to be a brother to me as soon as he could, so hit was all right."

"He knows good and well there aint a true word in his mouth when he says that," Orphy assured her. "I aint able to think well of him, Raldie; and I do wish he'd stay away from here."

"You don't have no idy, Orphy, how lonesome we git with you and Bud both gone, and Prentice is good company," pleaded the little maid, loth to lose at once a hope and an ideal.

"I'm old enough to know my own mind, sister. There never was but one boy in the world for me, and I don't never expect to see him no more."

"Well, I'll give Prent back his pin if you say to."

"You better—and have no more to do with him."

Next morning, Orphy, more than ever uneasy, cornered Bud.

"Why'n't you notify Prentice to stop hangin' round our house?" she began valiantly.

"He don't hang round enough to bother me. Good Lord, sis! what have you got agin Prent? I'd have a fight on my hands right now if I was to send him a word like that," countered Bud.

"You'll have wors'n a fight if you don't look out. I'm afeared for Raldie; she talks as if he was much to her. Our little sister! I don't like hit."

"Shpppp! That all? She's only a little switch of a gal. Now don't you worry; me and Dad's enough to look out for her. If you feel anyways bothered, you'd best think better of what you've said, and take him yourself."

After parting with Raldie, who had "walked a piece" of the way with her, Orphy left Bud's well worn trail to the valley and turned into a fainter one that led across the creek.

By the dark sheen of frozen pools, past filigrees of the spray and drip of little cataracts woven over night, through the shivering trackless woods she descended, mile after mile, following the waters of Caney.

Prentice, in the rock-house that sheltered the still, had just got his fire going in the primitive furnace. Two other men, joint-owners with him of this industry, had left him in charge for the morning, and had gone to haul a sled of corn. From time to time a noise of squealing and trampling came from the thick brush down-hill, where his hogs in a pen were awaiting their share of the waste after boiling.

"Condamn your thick hides," he sent good-naturedly to their address between tasks. "Want to call up ever' revenuer in Tennessee?"

Suddenly, with an access of squealing, was mingled a clear young treble, singing an air that he and Zaraldie and her brothers had sung together round the cabin hearth not a week ago. He straightened himself and stood, gun in hand, with puzzled eyes on the trail.

As the girl's blue-clad figure came gradually into view through the semi-transparent maple brush, he drew a breath of relief, although his face still expressed considerable anxiety.

"Well!" he greeted her blithely, striding forward with lowered weapon. "I make you welcome, Orphy; but you've took a good deal on yourself a-comin' here! If ye hadn't a-sung that song, I'd a-took a shot at ye. Git to the fire and warm. We set on that boulder." He



The girl's blue clad figure came into view

threw his coat over it for a cushion. "I been tellin' 'em this here place wasn't well hid."

"Tellin' who?"

"Oh, my shotes down yonder!" he laughed. "Why, you aint clumb all the way down Caney to find that out, have ye?"

"No, nor to look at shotes, neither."

She had laughed with him, but had not accepted the proffered seat, and now faced him with hands clasped before her.

"Prentice," she said, "wont you please stop a-goin' to our house?"

"Why, Orphy! whatever's got ye now?"

"Well, I've got a special reason for axin' sech a thing, or I wouldn't. Hit would please me mightily for you to promise me you'd never go there no more."

"Now, Orphy, s'fur's the old man's concerned, you know he's nachally got to—"

"Oh, don't say that to me!" she cried sharply. "That's what they all told me at home. Hit's something else I mean."

"I aint, honestly, doin' you-uns any harm that I know of."

"You know—"

She began in a low voice, halted, and then rushed on:

"You know I never have thought so much of you as my folks do; and I don't want Raldie to think too much of ye, neither."

She had chafed so against the necessity of asking anything of Prentice that now her impatience and confusion betrayed her into unguarded speech.

The young man stood looking at her flushed face, and thinking of what she had said.

"Oh," he said, quietly. "Why, I reckon the little trick likes me as well as I like her—for a sister. And I bid her to look at hit that way, too, because I'm always a-hopin' hit'll come to that yit."

"Well, I let her know hit'll never be!" cried Orphy, exasperated.

"Whatever made you do that, Orphy? Couldn't you see that only made bad worse? She aint been studyin' about me noways but as a likely brother, and now you've fixed things so hit may change."

"But if you was to never go about her any more," urged the girl.

"There's an easier way, you know," he suggested, coming closer. "Jist change your mind, Orphy. Make me her brother. Oh, now, don't fly off. This is the first time the woman I want has ever sat by my fire. Jist think of hit. I wont stay away from yourns' house—not for sech a reason. Don't—don't send me away. Whilst I'm in this business there's but few I can trust, and I've got no folks of my own. I'd fur ruther give up distillin' if that 'll move ye," he begged.

Her face softened as she thought upon his plea. It was true, there were few houses he could enter with confidence. Yet she had waked the weary night thinking of Zaraldie; she must not weaken now. Even should Prentice sever his connection with the blockade still, she would have but little to offer him.

Sadly she propounded the immemorial triangle:

"But if she was to care for you and you for me, and I care for—"

The incompleted sentence maddened him.

"Finish that sayin'," he demanded harshly, pouncing on her and catching her by the shoulders. "Finish hit! Who do you mean?"

"Nobody," she answered doggedly.

"Tell me!" he insisted.

"It was a long time ago," she at last confessed. "I aint seen him for years."

"I knowed there was some reason I couldn't make no headway with you, but I never had thought of that. Mart, wasn't hit—the boy your uncle raised? Shucks! we was all chaps-like when they went West, and he's likely enough dead or married long ago."

They stood silent, gazing out across the wintry gulch. At last she despaired of attaining any adjustment in this way, and turned to go. Her errand had failed.

"Aint ye goin' to give me a answer?" he asked softly, turning with her into the woods.

"You've had your answer long ago. What you can want of a gal that deespises you, I can't see!"

"Maybe because I've followed ye so



He found Orphy more than ever defiant

long; maybe because I've told folks hit was to be; maybe because I'm jist that kind of a feller, but want ye I do, and have ye I will." He spoke earnestly and without bravado. "I'll let ye know how Raldie is, when I come to town next week."

"You'd do well to go slow!" she retorted. "I give Bud what I thought about it, and he promised to look after her."

Prentice would not let her see how deeply he was hurt by this; but under the lash of her defiance and suspicion he struck without taking thought:

"Oh, Bud's all right. He's a-learnin' to take his liquor like a man."

As he turned back to stoke the rude furnace, and indeed all the rest of the week, he was haunted by the white shocked face she turned on him before vanishing round the rock.

When he again visited the cabin Bud

showed him a letter from Orphy. It's cry went straight through Prentice's armor:

"Bud, will you tell me, for God's sake, is it true that you are drinking? I can't sleep since I heard that. Let me know what could have started such talk."

"I wonder who told her that tale," was the boy's comment.

"You write a answer and I'll take hit down with me," Roark advised, a little uneasily. He had not meant to be cruel.

He found Orphy, as he had feared, more than ever defiant, flung a little off her usual self-possession.

"I jist come to see if you'd changed your mind," he began. "And to tell you that Raldie aims to keep that pin for a while, anyway. You don't never know for certain."

"Oh, Prentice, I'm might' near sick. What makes you do me so? Didn't Bud git my letter? Oh, of course you'd not

know. I ask ye oncet again, wont you stay away from our house?"

She laid down the knife with which she was scraping vegetables, and looked steadily at him over the big pan in her lap.

Prentice folded and refolded his soft hat between his hands.

"Orphy, I can't see for my life what makes you take on so. I've got a letter for ye from Bud; you can read hit right here. I was mean to tell ye what I did, but you'd riled me till I wasn't fairly at myself."

She reached for the letter, but he held it back.

"Tell me first," he begged, "that you'll give me a note to Raldie takin' back what you've told her. Orphy, I aint sech a bad one as you believe. I jist want your word that you'll marry me or nobody else," he insisted.

"Oh, I'll give ye that."

"And you'll write to the folks to say so?"

"Yes, yes; give me my letter!"

He came close to her, keeping the letter in his hand, looking in her face.

Orphy had risen, and now sprang back crying:

"Don't you touch me, Prent Roark—give me my letter!" and he obeyed.

Eagerly Orphy scanned the lines in which Bud assured her that the only liquor he had taken was when he caught a chill from being out in the raw winter rain. He could tell her, he would never love liquor; he "knowed too much about it now for his own peace." This was quite enough to set her at ease about Bud.

"If hit does you any good to know it, Prent, I hate you worse than ever for that lie," she declared, folding the paper slowly.

"Don't say that. Give me the writin' to the folks, now, and I'll go. I'm satisfied for the present to know that no man gits you if I don't."

So word went to the cabin home that sister had changed her mind and would some day "have" Prentice. But when the young wild-catter explained to Zaraldie that she might now wear his pin, she answered that she did not care for it any more—he could have it back.

It required resolution of a high order to remain away from home under the circumstances, but the wages that supplemented Bud's earnings were not to be lightly foregone, and the woods were dark with summer ere Orphy came again. Dr. Lewis had planned for a few months' vacation in Colorado and this allowed her a considerable stay.

July days are doubly long in the silent, beautiful loneliness that broods over Caney. All the blue, drowsy afternoon the girls sat on the porch and the boys sprawled in the shade in the clean swept yard. They held little speech, satisfied to be together under the home roof.

But here was a grown-up Zaraldie, quiet and reserved for all the old impulsive affection. Orphy thought she perceived a shadow on the young face beyond what a few months of responsibility should cast.

"Have you been worried about Man, honey?" she inquired.

"Why, I never noticed he was poorly till you spoke of hit," replied the girl with some compunction.

"I reckon what you need's a tonic, Man; but they tell me might' near all of them's got liquor in 'em, and I don't want to commence givin' ye that."

"Prentice might have let me have some o' his'n," said Man, "but when I named it to him he 'lowed he wouldn't hardly dast to with you promised to marry him. He told me he aims to quit makin' liquor this month, anyway."

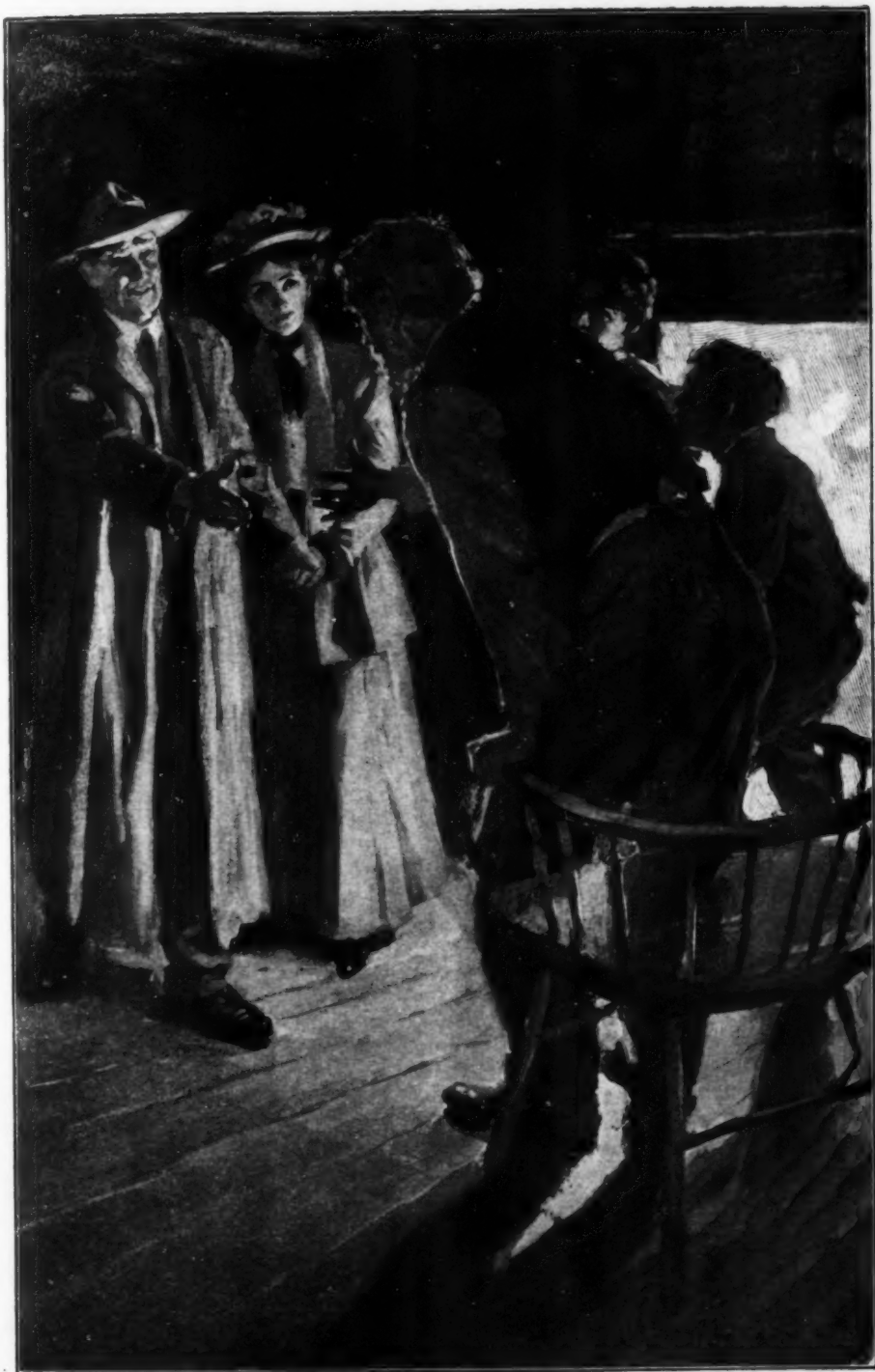
"He's 'lowancin' mine," was Dad's contribution.

"Would you go to see Dr. Lewis before he goes West, Man?" she asked.

"Aw—I don't know."

The doctor's office was no dragon's den to Orphy, who had often put it to rights in the morning; and she was able to partly overcome the boy's trepidation. It was decided that Bud should accompany his brother to the Settlement next day.

But Zaraldie's trouble was beyond medical aid. That night, while the whip-poorwills wailed in the edge of the woods and the garden sparkled with fireflies, Orphy was aware of her sister's wakefulness; she could not be sure whether



"Why, how're ye, Jesse?" he rumbled, genially

there was a tremor of inaudible sobbing.

At last she could no longer keep silent.

"Honey, what ails you? I can't stand it not to know. Tell sister!"

She crouched beside the girl, on the patch work wrought by patient hands long dead, and speaking as to the child who a few years ago had been content, on waking from some terrifying dream, to find that sister's breath still stirred her hair.

But she knew it was a woman who answered:

"I want to go away. I'm tired, tired of hit."

"Where you want to go to?"

"I'd like to git me something to do, like you did. I can cook good now. Why can't you and me jist change places?"

"I don't see how we could do that, Raldie," said the maid-mother, knowing how different was the work in town from everything learned in the cabin, and sure that Zaraldie among strangers would wither like transplanted mountain-laurel. "You see, when you said you wasn't goin' to school, I promised Miss' Lewis I'd go back and stay with them another winter. But I wont promise for no longer, so you can get away next year."

"Next year. Oh!" and Raldie's voice broke.

"The boys and Dad couldn't make out without us, or I'd jist take you with me."

"Aint ye goin' to git married and settle down?"

"Not this year," temporized Orphy, weakly.

The days drew forward, slipping one by one, beads of a golden rosary, but threaded on a triple strand of pain.

One night as they dressed for a play-party in a neighboring cove, Orphy inquired, as she was about to fasten Zaraldie's collar:

"Where's your pin?"

"What you axin' me that for?" flashed Zaraldie. "You still mad cause Prentice give hit to me?"

"Why, I jist thought hit would look pretty on you. I wasn't never mad about it," said Orphy, in surprise at the outburst.

"I done lost hit long ago."

And Raldie fell to brooding.

That evening, in the course of a game, Prentice chose Zaraldie for a partner—Zaraldie in a white dress, curls, and string of beads, sweet and warm as a velvet rose. "Fire on the mountain, fun, boys, fun," he sang, dancing all over with the mountaineer swing, his head just clearing the rafters.

As he took the girl's hand to lead her through their part, suddenly Orphy knew. That flushed, sweet face, with a dark-eyelashed twilight of modesty veiling its starry happiness, could mean but one thing.

It was Prentice who, on the way home, let her know how he and Zaraldie had been together at a number of frolics during the past winter.

"She's good company oncet she gits a-goin'. And I think, seein' she's to be my sister, you nee'n'to object. I do think you treat me scandalous."

Orphy was baffled, wordless. Prentice never presumed on the promise she had given him, but she felt bound by it to a semblance of friendliness. There seemed nothing she could do.

As the summer went on, her knowledge of Raldie's poor, little, unconfessed love became a wall between the sisters. Neither was able to speak of it; neither could think of anything else. Prentice's appearance in the low doorway at any hour sufficed to set both girls acutely on the defensive.

And he caught himself more than once watching Zaraldie, or doing small services and offering small services for the glance of warm thanks she could not forbear giving him. Zaraldie was being happy while she could. Orphy had promised that she should go to town when Prent was married; but "I needn't go; it will be the end of life to me," thought the young girl; and meantime, "Nobody need know that I care." Yet sometimes, when she and Prentice were alone together, a current of emotion flashed from one to the other; their speech fell away into silence, and they smiled at each other with trembling lips.

"If Orphy would only look at me like that!" was his longing.

One day, when the blue and gold of September was inclining toward the

richer purple and scarlet of autumn, Prentice hauled a load of apples to town. As Orphy was now ready to return to her place there, he offered her a seat in his wagon.

"If Man'll help me load 'em he can ride over the mountain with me, too, and see that doctor again. My Limbertwigs is all honest produce this time," he added, laughing. "I'm out of the liquor business oncet for all."

Almost the look he craved rewarded him.

When Man came home he sat till far in the night recounting what the doctor had told him of the West.

"He seed our uncle Ed out there. Says you can ketch feesh with your hands in Uncle Ed's errigation ditches. And he raises, I don't recollect what all; you ride over his land a hour before you git to the house. And when he hearded the doctor was from this part of the country, he axed about us, and Doctor Lewis he told about me, and—and he 'lowed he aimed to send for me to come out there."

"What did the doctor say about that?" asked Bud.

"He judged hit might do me a power o' good, and he hoped how soon I'd go."

November spilled the year's wealth upon the land in wild frost-sweetened fruits and mast and chestnuts, and Bud's hearth-fires grew in glory, fed with fat knots and roots of pine—flowing over logs, licking round the kettle, whirling against the soot-mossed back of the fireplace, displaying rainbows of strange colors, and pouring finally into the black throat of the chimney as a waterfall disappears into a sunless gorge. No stranger can ever know the real beauty of this red heart of home, which mocks the old north with its low, cheery music—with soft roar of burning, with laughing sparkle, with flicker and blue flutter, with the fusillade of hickories, and the "treading snow" of brands half-consumed, and the last clink of the falling ash at sleeping-time.

Into this radiance came Prentice one evening, his lungs and his garments filled with the breath of the keen clear night.

"Hit'll frost to-night," he said, nodding all round. "Like a young snow."

"I make ye no less welcome, Prent," complained Dad Farris, "but hit's a on-disputed fac' that I aint had a drap o' good whiskey sence the last you give me. This here boughten stuff's a sin to the lizards. I cayn't drink hit."

"Sorry," laughed the young man. "I'll show Raldie how to make persimmon beer, and we can all drink some. But I got shut of that business in a good time," he continued, seating himself in one of Orphy's new chairs. "You'ns aint hearded about the raid?"

"We never hear anything 'thout you or Bud tells us." Dad's tone was still aggrieved.

"Well, they sure made one to-day. That marshal must be a devil-yarker! Went right down Caney alone, and slipped up on 'em in the still—ketched 'em makin' a run, and slipped between them and their guns and covered 'em. They got rattled and run spang into his arms. Got 'em both."

"Oh, I'm proud you was out of hit long ago," breathed Zaraldie.

"I am, myself. Orphy she'll be glad to hear about hit. You can write her."

They told the thing over and over, and discussed all its aspects again and again, fixing it well in mind. Afterward the conversation turned to Orphy; where was she, and when would they see her again? Was she growing too fond of staying in town? Or was she, on the contrary, unhappy with homesickness?

Bud and Prentice were upholding one balance of probability and Raldie and Dad another, when again the door swung open, and Orphy herself appeared.

"I was hopin' you'd all be settin' up together!" she cried joyously, before any of the startled occupants of the room could frame a question. "Dad, here's Uncle Ed come to see you. We walked out from town together."

A tall man stooped through the doorway behind her—a man browned with many summers and grizzled with many snows, yet in appearance younger than Dad.

"Why, how're ye, Jesse?" he rumbled, genially. "You're gray as a rat. What y'been a-doin' to yerself?"

"Are you Uncle Ed? Are you Dad's brother?" screeched Man in delight, dancing on one leg all round the hastily quitted circle of chairs.

The two men shook and shook both each other's hands; then the Westerner caught the mountaineer by the shoulders and shook him; then they fell to shaking hands again, Dad reiterating all the while that he was indeed "powerful weak, powerful weak, Ed, but hit does me a world o' good to see you."

"Well, I aint so surprised," said the newcomer, standing back at last, "not when I look at your family, and think Ann's been dead this many years. This Bud? Howdy! Man ever' eench. Orphy's been a-tellin' about him as her and me come on. Raldie, honey, come and give your ol' uncle a kiss. They been skase things in my time. Like sis Betty, aint she, Jesse? Here's the boy that's goin' home with me? Looks to me you must have growed too fast, Man. They ortn't to have give ye sech a name to live up to, and then ye might have took your own time to hit. You can read and write, can't ye? That's right. I always 'lowed there ought to be a few scribes in amongst sech a bunch o' Farrisees."

Dad slipped his word edgewise. "This here's Prentice Roark—old Arch's boy, Ed. He's e'en-aboyut one o' the family," with a nod toward the fireside where the two sisters stood.

"Howdy, boy. I'd a-knowed you was Arch's by your looks. So you and Orphy's promised? Well, well—she never named you to me, and I was jist a-fixin' to tell her what Mart said. You recomember him, do ye? He 'lowed if she wasn't married he'd be glad to hear from her. He's in with me on the sheers."

"Mart!" breathed Orphy. "Is he—how is he?"

"He's all right. He's turned out well, honest and stiddy, and smart with hit; jist the man for any gal, be she free.

Good thing for Mart he don't know ye like you air now, or he'd be powerful disappointed."

They fell to planning for Man's going away; then Uncle Ed must hear the news of old neighbors, and the others must be told of the wonderland West. But Prentice sat silent, drawn back into the corner. He looked from one sad girl face to the other, and bethought himself of a way to lighten the shadow on both.

But like the Indian who inhabited his forests aforetime, the mountaineer moves with caution until the moment to strike. The hickory log had burnt to a bed of coals ere he finally spoke the word that freed them all from a false position.

"You're mighty right I aim to be one o' the family," he stated abruptly, "the first chanst I git, but you're mistaken in the gal."

Uncle Ed, unaware of the sensation aroused by this seemingly innocent explanation of a very natural mistake, talked on.

"I had good luck takin' one boy to raise; I feel considerable encouraged to try another. And if so be you aint promised to nobody, Orphy—well, I wouldn't let Raldie put me to dance in the kettle if I was you."

But all the young people, at least, knew what Orphy meant by her murmur as Prentice took his leave:

"I might have treated you better, Prent."

"That's all done and forgot about," he answered.

The light of the embers reddened moment by moment on the group of happy faces, and the brave housegear that Orphy's service had introduced. A hoarsely jubilant chorus of cock-crow arose from the chimney shelter outside.

It was Zaraldie who flung open the door for Prentice; and they two stepped forth to say good-night beneath the black-diamond stars.

An Even Break

BY WILLIAM WALLACE COOK

"Author of 'The Pay Streak,' etc.

THE clock wheezed, gasped eight times and subsided with a gurgle.

"That's a funny thing," remarked Tutweiler. "The clock strikes eight but looks like half-past seven. Which is right, Napoleon, the gong or the hands?"

"Neither of 'em," said Napoleon, driving the last screw in a plate that held a push-button against the wall. "When the clock strikes eight and looks like half-past seven it's a quarter to nine."

He laid the screw-driver on a scrap-book which served for a "rogues' gallery" and lowered himself into a chair.

"High time Backus and this party from McLean blew in. Aint you plumb tired waitin' for 'em?"

Tutweiler's entranced eyes were held by the clock. Incidentally, his mind was dealing with the problem for getting at the correct time.

"Why don't you fix it, Napoleon?" he inquired. "They say you've a knack for inventing things. Couldn't you make that clock tell the simple truth if you tried?"

"Not for nothing I aint called 'Napoleon,'" replied the turnkey, ruffling his red hair with one hand and half-closing his left eye. "When the old man makes up his mind to take me serious, there's a lot of things I'll do to make this a model institution. But he don't. He kicked the model of my improved penitentiary out of the jail office, and everybody knows how he smashed my patent gallows and used it for kindlin'."

Napoleon scowled and bent over to roll the cannon-ball at the cat.

"Backus," he added wrathfully, "can't appreciate genius no more'n a Feejee. If anybody else but me had flashed that

improved 'pen' on him, or that gallows with the patent trap, he'd have tumbled all over himself to get 'em protected at Washington for an interest."

"There's a rival inventor in the jail, I hear," said Tutweiler tentatively, and with an air of subdued caution.

"That's what I *hear* myself," scoffed Napoleon, "but I aint seen nothing he's invented. You're referrin' to Hiram Yep, the horse-thief in Cell Three?"

Tutweiler nodded.

"What's he thought up?" Napoleon asked.

"I'm a good deal in the dark about it," hedged Tutweiler.

He had been pledged to secrecy and felt that he had gone too far.

The door opened at that moment and Backus, sheriff of Wells, appeared ushering the tall, angular figure of Hokeberry, sheriff of McLean. Backus carried a box under his arm.

"Sorry to keep you waiting," he apologized to the sheriff of Bottineau. "The train was late and this box didn't get in from Jimtown till pretty near nine."

"Don't fret about that, Backus," said Tutweiler amiably. "Napoleon puts up a line of talk that's mighty entertaining."

"Nap's full of various kinds of hot-air," frowned the sheriff of Wells, "and he's got a way of meddling that gets on my nerves."

"You're excused for now, Napoleon," he finished, waving the turnkey toward the open door.

"Why?" demanded Napoleon.

"Us three sheriffs are going into executive session on matters appertaining to the peace and welfare of our respective counties," explained Backus.

"You're the doctor," muttered Napoleon. "I'll wind up the cat and put the clock out and then you can go on with your star-chamber proceedin's."

"He's a case," grinned Hokeberry.

"He's a trial, that's what he is," grunted Backus, placing the box on the table.

The box was seven inches square, tightly corded, the knots sealed, and bore a tag inscribed:

HIRAM YEP,
COUNTY JAIL,
SYKESTOWN,
NORTH DAKOTA.

Care Aaron Backus, Sheriff.

There was a knowing smile on Napoleon's face as he wound the clock but the smile had faded when he turned, rolled the cannon-ball to its place beside the door and took the cat under his arm.

"Don't go to bed, Napoleon," said Backus; "take a chair in the corridor for a while. I'll need you, I guess."

Napoleon went out, grumbling and boxing the cat's ears.

"Help yourself to a chair, Hoke," proceeded Backus, turning a key in the door.

Coming back to the table, he seated himself beside it and laid a caressing hand on the box.

"You know pretty well what this round-up means, don't you?" he asked.

"I'm wise to this much," returned Hokeberry, twisting his long extremities around the legs of his chair and slouching forward with his elbows on the chair-arms: "We've come together to examine into these inventions of Yep's, and, if they stand investigation, to put through the patents for our own use and benefit."

"Don't be so brutally frank," urged Tutweiler. "What good would the patents ever do Yep? He'll go over the road for fifteen or twenty years, being an old offender, and if we don't acquire the use and benefit of his inventions, who will? No one owns him for a relative."

"Quite so, quite so," approved Backus. "And here's another point, gentlemen. McLean, Wells, and Bottineau counties have been the scene of Yep's depredations

for years. The trouble we've had with him ought to be worth something, hadn't it?"

"It had," declared Hokeberry. "But I'm not going to take any stock in these inventions till I try 'em for myself."

"That's how I feel," spoke up Tutweiler, "even if we are getting something for almost nothing."

"I stack up similar," said Backus. "I haven't seen these inventions myself, but I've talked about 'em with Yep, and I tell you they have their good points. I had Yep send to Jimtown after three outfits, and I propose to have Napoleon bring the prisoner up here so he can give us a demonstration. If either of us can slip the cuffs, or wriggle out of the ankle-irons, or make a noise behind the gag, then the deal's off."

"What's the improvements Yep has worked out?" asked Hokeberry.

"Well, they'll hold a man like grim death, and they're collapsible, and so light a sheriff can carry a dozen sets and not feel 'em in his clothes."

"That's what Yep says," commented Tutweiler. "What'll it cost to put the patents through?"

"A hundred and fifty 'll do the whole thing."

"And Yep aint to get a soo?" asked Hokeberry.

Backus coughed. "Yep, gentlemen," said he, "is the most un-so-phisticated man for a horse-thief you most ever saw. He says that all he wants is to interest a few shinin' lights of law and order, and he bats the whole proposition up to us. He hasn't even filed a caveat. After Yep shows us how the thing works, why, we can do as we please with 'em."

"Well, bring the prisoner up, Backus," suggested Hokeberry, "and let's have a look at what he's got."

The sheriff of Wells stepped to the door, unlocked it, and pulled it open.

"Napoleon," he called, "go to Cell Three and bring Yep. Leave the come-alongs on him and don't forget to take the office gun."

Yep, a wiry man with a shrewd black eye and a face that suggested character of a sort, was presently towed into the office by the turnkey. Napoleon carried

a large revolver in his left hand and had his right arm thrust through the prisoner's.

"What's up, Backus?" Napoleon inquired. "You aint goin' to look over any inventions of Yep's when you wouldn't pay any attention to my Patent Shotgun Protector and—"

"You're to look on and keep watch of the prisoner," cut in Backus sharply. "You've been foolin' away your time on patent 'pens' and scaffolds and shotgun protectors, and now you'll have a chance, I guess, to see something that's worth while.

"Yep," and the sheriff of Wells turned to the prisoner, "you've met Tutweiler and Hokeberry in their official capacities, so there's no need of introductions."

"I've had a knock-down to both gents," answered Yep pleasantly. "Span o' grays, it was, in McLean, if I remember right, and a whole bunch of bronks in Bottineau."

"Let that pass," interposed Backus. "I've interested Tutweiler and Hokeberry in your inventions and they're here by my invitation. They're willin' to test the things out and tell you whether they come up to specifications."

"I've had enough experience with manacles," observed Yep, "to know where the old kinds are weak and can be improved. This here is the age of progress, and I've done what I could to help out the cause of right and justice. Gents, I'm a repentant man. I've been careless with the law, and by inventing the things in that box I hope I've done a little something towards squaring myself."

The sheriff of Wells winked at the sheriff of Bottineau; then, with much gravity, the sheriff of Wells turned to Napoleon.

"Take the cuffs off his wrists, Napoleon," he ordered, "and pull your chair in front of the door, keepin' the gun where it's convenient for use."

The steel bracelets were removed and Yep stretched his arms above his head in a spasm of luxurious relief. Napoleon, seated in front of the closed door, revolver on his knees, awaited developments with intense interest.

"Considering my repentant state," said

Yep, advancing upon the table and the box, "I maintain that it's dead wrong to keep me in irons when the cell door's locked."

"I'm not taking any chances with a man like you," answered Backus.

A covert smile played around the prisoner's lips, but he did not pursue that particular line of argument any further.

"The small inventions to which I am about to invite your attention," said he, after the cord was removed from the box and the cover taken off, "are the fruit of many years' study and experiment. I have evolved wrist- and ankle-irons that are of feather-weight heft, but stronger than bands of brass; they're keyless and, after they're on, can only be removed by manipulating three little knobs, same as you open a cash-drawer; and they're non-slippable, automatically fitting each and every wrist they're put on, likewise each and every ankle. The gags—well, I'll let them speak for themselves."

He produced a pair of handcuffs and ankle-irons and tossed them to Hokeberry, then yielded another outfit to Tutweiler and a third to Backus.

The sheriffs examined the "irons" critically.

"Mebby they're the goods and mebbly they aint," said Hokeberry. "Can't tell till I try 'em."

"Allow me," said Backus, stepping forward.

In a minute he had the steel contrivances upon the arm and legs of the sheriff of McLean, and that angular gentleman was struggling to get the gyves off his bony wrists. Tutweiler and Backus enjoyed his contortions, the office ringing with their mirth.

"I'll bet a blue stack I can come nearer getting them off than you can, Hoke," sputtered Tutweiler.

"I never see things grab so," panted Hokeberry, red and perspiring. "Why don't you try 'em then, if you're so smart?"

Tutweiler stretched forth his hands and pushed out his legs.

Backus accommodated him, and presently the sheriff of Bottineau was also squirming.

"Why don't you slip the cuffs?" taunted Hokeberry. "You're not making any more headway than what I am."

"Thunder!" exclaimed Tutweiler, "I fell like I was anchored to the rock of Gibraltar. They're some on the hold, these things. But I'm thin, and so is Hoke. You're stouter than either of us, Backus, and maybe they wont work so well on a fat man."

"Somethin' in that," assented Hokeberry. "Thieves aint all hideracks, like me, or attenuated specimens like Tutweiler."

"We'll see," glowed Backus, carried away by the novel exhibition. "Yep," he went on to the prisoner, "I've put the irons on you, once or twice, now you put 'em on me."

"The pleasure is mine," smiled Yep, carrying out the request with alacrity.

The three sheriffs were soon twisting and struggling to their own great diversion and to the growing joy of Napoleon.

"These haven't been tried yet, gents," said the prisoner jovially, taking the gags from the box. "A gag, of course, is not always a prime necessity, but I think you would oftentimes find it a help in performing your official duties."

"By all means," cried Tutweiler joyously, "let's have on the gags!"

"Make the show complete, neighbor," seconded Hokeberry, choking with merriment.

"Let's have all the trimmings," exploded Backus. "What a picture we must make! Three officers of the law, gagged and manacled by a horse-thief!"

The sheriff of Wells leaned back against the wheel of the iron letter-press and fairly roared. Tutweiler and Hokeberry were certainly being convinced of these inventions of Yep's, and Yep, the unsophisticated, of course had not the least notion of the idea of appropriation which lay at the back of the sheriffs' heads.

This secret thought contributed mightily to the officials' fun.

Deftly Hiram Yep applied the gags. Hardly were they in place, however, when the slow horror of being mute as well as helpless rolled over Backus, Tut-

weiler, and Hokeberry. They had gone one step too far.

The sheriff of Wells endeavored to make it known that he and his *confrères* were to be released, but not a sound escaped from behind the gag. His eyes bulged in their sockets, and he stretched out his gyved hands in a gesture that implored relief.

But the real blow was yet to fall.

Yep turned to Napoleon.

"How's that?" he asked.

"Fine!" cried Napoleon enthusiastically, getting up from his chair.

The sheriffs stared, rolled their eyes and began feverishly to wonder—about many things. Perhaps suspicion also was borne in upon their careless minds, the situation being fraught with so many possibilities.

"Backus," said Napoleon triumphantly, "this is one on you. Here I've been for years, workin' as turnkey for you and inventin' things that you wouldn't have nothin' to do with and didn't think amounted to shucks. You never took me serious, you know you didn't. If I tried any improvements on this old jail, I had to sneak around and make 'em unbeknownst to you. Well, I guess all that will be changed from now on.

"The wrist- and ankle-irons that's holdin' you was invented by me—*me*, you understand, and not by Yep. That gag's a little thing of my own, too. I didn't come to you when I'd worked 'em out, did I? You can gamble I didn't. I knowed you'd treat 'em like you done the improved 'pen' and the patent gallows. I fixed this up with Yep, and he agreed to purtend the inventions was *his*, and to ask you to let him give a demonstration. He said he had three sets of manacles and gags in Jintown. He didn't. They was mine, and they was in the hands of the machinist who made 'em for me. I wrote down and had the machinist send 'em on, addressed to Yep. Say, I guess the inventions are all right, aint they? I've convinced you, haven't I, that they'll do the work? You wont go up in the air, will you, when I tell you I've tampered with the clock and installed my shotgun protector in this jail while you was away on duty? If you're

willin' to back me in puttin' these inventions on the market, nod. Will you nod, or—"

Napoleon, in the joy of the moment and the intensity of his desire to convince Backus that he was a genius to be reckoned with, did not pay as much attention to Yep as he should have done. Backus, Tutweiler, and Hokeberry noticed this lack of attention, and were alarmed over it, but it was impossible for them to warn the turnkey. Their thoughts, at best, were chaotic, for helplessness like theirs was extremely demoralizing.

Yep, pursuing a dark and nefarious design of his own, had edged around to the vicinity of the cannon-ball. That solid shot was a relic of Sibley's campaign against the Sioux, and Backus cherished it for its associations and used it to prop the door open on warm, windy days. Now for the execution of his fell purpose, Hiram Yep made other use of the cannon-ball.

He gave it a slight push with his feet, and then a mighty shove. The rolling ball collided with Napoleon's feet and he crumpled against the letter-press, dropping the office gun.

Yep moved like lightning. Before the horrified eyes of the sheriffs, he held Napoleon against the press and twisted the cuffs taken from his own wrists about the wrists of Napoleon. When he had finished, the two links connecting the bracelets were woven through the wheel of the letter-press, and the turnkey was more securely rooted to the spot than he would have been with ball and chain.

Despair clutched at the heart of the sheriff of Wells. He struggled erect on his pinioned legs, then tumbled headlong against the sheriff of Bottineau. Tutweiler's chair was overturned, and the prostrate sheriffs glared into each other's eyes and breathed hard.

"Gentlemen," said Yep agreeably, pos-

sessing himself of the office gun, "I must be going. Hereafter, Backus, I would suggest that you take your turnkey seriously. I did, and look at the benefits that have come my way. Early to-morrow I shall have transferred myself to Manitoba, so it wont do you any good to follow my trail. Farewell, a long farewell."

He opened the door and went out. Those in the office heard his retreating footsteps die away in silence. Napoleon, leaning heavily on the letter-press, lifted one foot and touched the push-button he had that evening made fast to the wall.

At once an inferno of sound rang through the lower part of the jail. Gongs set up a wild tocsin and a bell pealed. The hubbub was broken in upon by the sudden report of a firearm. Napoleon leaned upon the iron wheel to which he was chained and blandly surveyed the astounded sheriffs. A human cry had followed the incisive note of the gun and had added to the pandemonium.

"I guess it's an even break, Backus," observed Napoleon. "My shotgun protector and automatic alarm has got in its work. The clock and an electric battery do the business. The minute I kicked that push-button, every board from the foot of the stairs to the outside door was arranged to trip the trigger. The gun was aimed low, and Yep has only suffered a temporary inconvenience about the shins that'll keep him from usin' his feet. Purty nigh the whole town'll be here inside o' sixty seconds, and I guess Yep can wait as long for a doctor as we can for a blacksmith. That's what ailed the clock, Tutweiler, only I wasn't aimin' to tell you when you asked."

At that moment the clock struck ten while the hands indicated half-past nine; and Tutweiler, just to pass the time and soothe his conflicting emotions, tried to figure out the correct hour.



Two waifs of the world turning to each other

Little Sister to Pineapple Alley

BY GRACE SARTWELL MASON

ILLUSTRATED BY BERNARD J. ROSENMEYER

WRAPPED in an atmosphere of deepest dejection the cub reporter kicked his heels against a lamppost and waited for his Jean. At 5:35 precisely she was borne out to him from a nearby office building on a tide of the homeward bound—a small lassie, very trig as to hair and clothes, with a bird-like dignity and quick-glancing gray eyes. These eyes became maternal and anxious as their gaze lighted on Sandy MacFarlan and his countenance of gloom: she knew without a question that he had lost his job.

Therefore, as she reached him, she hailed him gayly and tucked her hand

under his arm with a gesture instinctively protective. She would have challenged the world and met it single handed for Sandy.

"Never mind; you'll get another one," she said, as they turned out of the avenue into a quiet street. He stared down at her in astonishment; her intuitions had always seemed to him uncanny.

He tried to laugh as he said:

"Say, you've got eyes all around, like a spider—only prettier! I wasn't going to tell you, but you'd guess anyway. It's like this: I'm not officially fired, but Morse passed it along to me this morning that the local squad is to be reduced, and

being the last comer, I'm in line to lose my head first. That's what they say—it simply means I haven't handed out the stuff they want. Morse as good as told me the Chief insinuated he hadn't been able to discover that I am of any particular value to the *Despatch*—do you see? I'm just a failure, my girl—I—"

The little stenographer stopped short and eyed him firmly.

"Now, Sandy, I want have any such talk! You are *not* a failure; it's just that they don't appreciate you! What does the old paper want, anyway?"

"Want? That's what I've been trying to find out. I've done all kinds of stuff, but the thing I do best they won't have. Why, the other day I wrote half a column about the wives of two Polish saloonkeepers and the row they had over a goat one of them kept in a cellar. It was a live story about real people—why, I know Mrs. Zelinski and her friend as well as I know the folks at home—and it was turned down! Old Colburn said it would shock our subscribers! That's what they need! The old *Despatch* is languishing from acute gentility; we never print anything about the other half of the world without making it fit for our subscribers who live on the up-town avenues. No matter how much poverty or disease or injustice there may be in the tenement district, for example, the real facts never get through the *Despatch* to its rich subscribers—the very class that has the power to make things better down there! It's all wrong! If a man has the power our Chief has he ought to use it for the benefit of the people."

"That's what the Socialist in our office says," she nodded. "You're not a Socialist, are you, Sandy?"

She looked at him and sighed. He was the center of the world for her, but she was too shrewd to be blind to Sandy's limitations—how many women ever are! She acknowledged to herself with a sinking heart that he had not the making of a news-ferret; he would never, never be the star reporter on the *Despatch*, or any other newspaper.

"Don't you—don't you sometimes think it would be better for you to go

back to your Uncle's store, Sandy?" she began, timidly.

"Don't you go back on me, Jean! You know how I want to write. Why, look at this fascinating old world all around us! Just to take a pencil and a piece of blank paper and make people see its queer nooks and corners and it's funny Mrs. Zelinskis—that's my idea of success. And some day, I'm going to get the hang of how to do it—if I don't starve before I learn."

She made a little sound in her throat and he looked down at her with a new contrition. They had come to the door of her boarding-house. The winter night had already settled down upon the street, and there was a patch of deeper blackness in the shadow of the front steps. They paused here as if from habit, and clung to each other for an instant. They were two waifs of the world turning to each other for courage in the intervals of the battle. Not a year before, a fellow waif had introduced them; each had boasted a Scotch grandmother; they had fallen to walking in the parks on a Sunday; he had begun waiting to take her home from her work—and now they had become the very necessity of life to each other. But—

"I ought to give you up, Jean," he whispered.

"I will not be given up!" she cried, trying to laugh. "I could not be married now, anyway. I've got to have a lot more things."

She nearly choked over the immortal feminine lie; but already he had flown off on optimistic wings.

"I've got another week or two," he explained eagerly. "Old Colburn—city editor, you know—begins his usual after Christmas vacation to-morrow, and the Chief's not back from Palm Beach yet. That brings Morse into charge. He's a friend of mine and he'll give my stuff a fair show. He says try and do something striking, something that will make the subscribers write and ask questions. Morse isn't afraid; he says give 'em human interest, even if it isn't refined! I'm to do a series of little stories about the people outside the gilt-edge zone, and good old Morse will see they go in."

"That's splendid!"

"Yes, if I can get the stuff. You see, sometimes nothing of the right sort comes my way for days. They have got to be true stories; not even Morse will stand for faked stuff."

She nodded thoughtfully.

"I'll ask the Socialist in our office. He knows more about the underside of this town than anybody else. Now I must go in. Don't you worry, dear, things will come right."

It was two days later that he dropped in on his old friend, Mrs. Donohue, who operated a coffee and sandwich stand the size of an anchorite's cell just on the fringe of a neighborhood odorous and down at the heel, if not actually dubious.

"Thim Pineapple Alley houses 're the worrst of the lot," she said, looking at the note Sandy spread out on her little counter. "It may be a dacoey letter, an' again it may not—ye never c'n tell about thim tiniment trash."

She folded her arms with a serene consciousness of her own status. "But I'll tell ye how to get there, if it's there ye're set on goin'. Ye go past Ryan's to the big Chinese launthry on the corner, an' then ye turn to the left an' kape on to the second alley. No. 7 is in back of No. 9—an' it's a hole! I had a frind, Maggie Doyle, a dacent, hard worrkin' woman, too, an' she lived there once. An' I sez to Maggie—"

But Sandy was in a hurry; he could not wait to hear what Mrs. Donohue said to Maggie Doyle, for in his hand he held a note, signed "M. Murray," bidding him call at No. 7, Pineapple Alley, fourth floor back, at noon, if he would like to get an interesting story for the late edition.

"If it's a sell, Mrs. Donohue, I'll be back and treat the kids," he called over his shoulder to her as he headed towards Ryans.

But Veroniac and Aloysius and Jerome Donohue were not destined that day to partake of sweets at his expense. For, an hour and half later, Mrs. Donohue caught a glimpse of Sandy McFarlan flying past her window without so much

as a look within, his blue eyes fixed on an unseen goal, his long legs bearing him rapidly uptown, his fingers already feeling in his pocket for a pencil. She did not recognize the divine afflatus; but Sandy did. He had got his great story; all he asked of a merciful Providence just now was time enough to get it into the four o'clock edition.

He flung himself in front of a desk. With his shoulders humped and his pencil gripped in a warlike grasp he wrote the record of a Pineapple Alley tenement house—a story like a live wire, youthfully unafraid, brutally realistic, —a cry for vengeance from the depths of Pineapple Alley.

At half-past three Morse charged through the city-room looking for Sandy MacFarlan. In one hand he brandished a strip of proof, and with the other he rumbled his lank black hair. He caught the cub reporter just as he came out of a telephone-booth.

"Oh, Sandy! for Heaven's sake where did you get it?" he cried.

Sandy looked anxiously at the proof.

"Are you going to let it go in?" he asked.

"Go in! Go in? It's the best story that's been turned in for months. There's only one thing troubling my soul: are you sure it's the real stuff, Sandy?"

"It's the truth!" blazed Sandy. "I wish you could have seen that tenement house, Morse. I don't know who owns it, but he's breaking most of the city ordinances; the place is a disease hatchery and a fire-trap and a tomb for human beings to live in and pay rent for!"

"Good!" said Morse, professionally. "A bit yellow, but very good for this time of the year—bitter weather, broken panes, fireless rooms and all that. Play it up for its human interest, see? Go down there to-morrow and work it up. We'll get the societies and the sympathetic readers on the jump, and then, at the dramatic moment, we'll expose the owner and cover ourselves with glory. You keep this up as you've begun and we'll have ladies in here weeping over you, Sandy."

Twenty-four hours later Sandy MacFarlan had his first nibble at fame. His

story concerning No. 7 Pineapple Alley had achieved an effect that not even Morse had foreseen. The first result was a letter in one of the morning papers protesting that such things could not be in a city so famed for its philanthropic and charitable societies; the next was a visit from a stout and angry gentleman who declared that, as President of the Society for the Amelioration of Distress among the Deserving Poor, he felt himself personally insulted by the article. It must have been a gross exaggeration of facts—he himself had visited that district and had observed no such conditions.

Morse turned him over to Sandy with a grin; and Sandy, just in from his second visit to Pineapple Alley, hotly offered proof of every word he had written.

"The place doesn't front on the alley," he explained; "it has apparently been overlooked because you go through No. 9 to get to it—and Societies always travel in a beaten track. I'll take you there to-morrow, sir!" he added defiantly.

This was the burden of his reply to the inquiries, incredulous and otherwise, that poured in during the afternoon. By five o'clock he had offered to pilot no less than nine people to the scene of his investigations; and when he met his Jean as she came from her work, he wore a flush of triumph. Larsen, the young Socialist from Jean's office, joined them and the three of them walked to Jean's boarding-house, very slowly, their heads together in an animated conversation.

At the doorway Jean cried with suppressed excitement:

"I'll be on exhibition from four to six! Don't forget my name, Sandy—Miss Murray, artificial flowers."

The early editions of next day's *Despatch* continued Sandy's success. There were photographs of No. 7 Pineapple Alley and a column of matter. It was evident that someone was supplying the paper with most pertinent and realistic details. They brought forth a second storm of inquiry from anxious readers. An enthusiastic young lady offered Sandy her automobile for a tour of all the tenement houses in town; two wide-

awake churches testified their willingness to join the *Despatch* in a crusade against the old tenements; and Mrs. Bronson-Wetherell, famous for the practical wisdom of her philanthropy, came in person and asked to see Sandy.

It was this lady and the President of the Society for the Amelioration of Distress, etc., whom Sandy finally elected to conduct personally through the malodorous archway which led to No. 7 and up the creaking stairs to the fourth floor back, where a pale young woman, named by Sandy as Miss Murray, maker of artificial flowers, met them and offered them a chair and an upturned soap-box in her bare cell of a room. Her manner was nervous and a trifle defiant, but she seemed very willing to talk. Ignoring the portly and fussy gentleman, she turned her intelligent gaze upon Mrs. Bronson-Wetherell and delivered her facts to that shrewd-eyed lady; and at the end of her remarks she took them on a little tour of inspection, which left them at the front door indignant and shaken. The stout gentleman was full of verbose but vague plans for the immediate reclamation of No. 7; but Mrs. Bronson-Wetherell made a business-like note of the house-agents' address and went away in portentous silence.

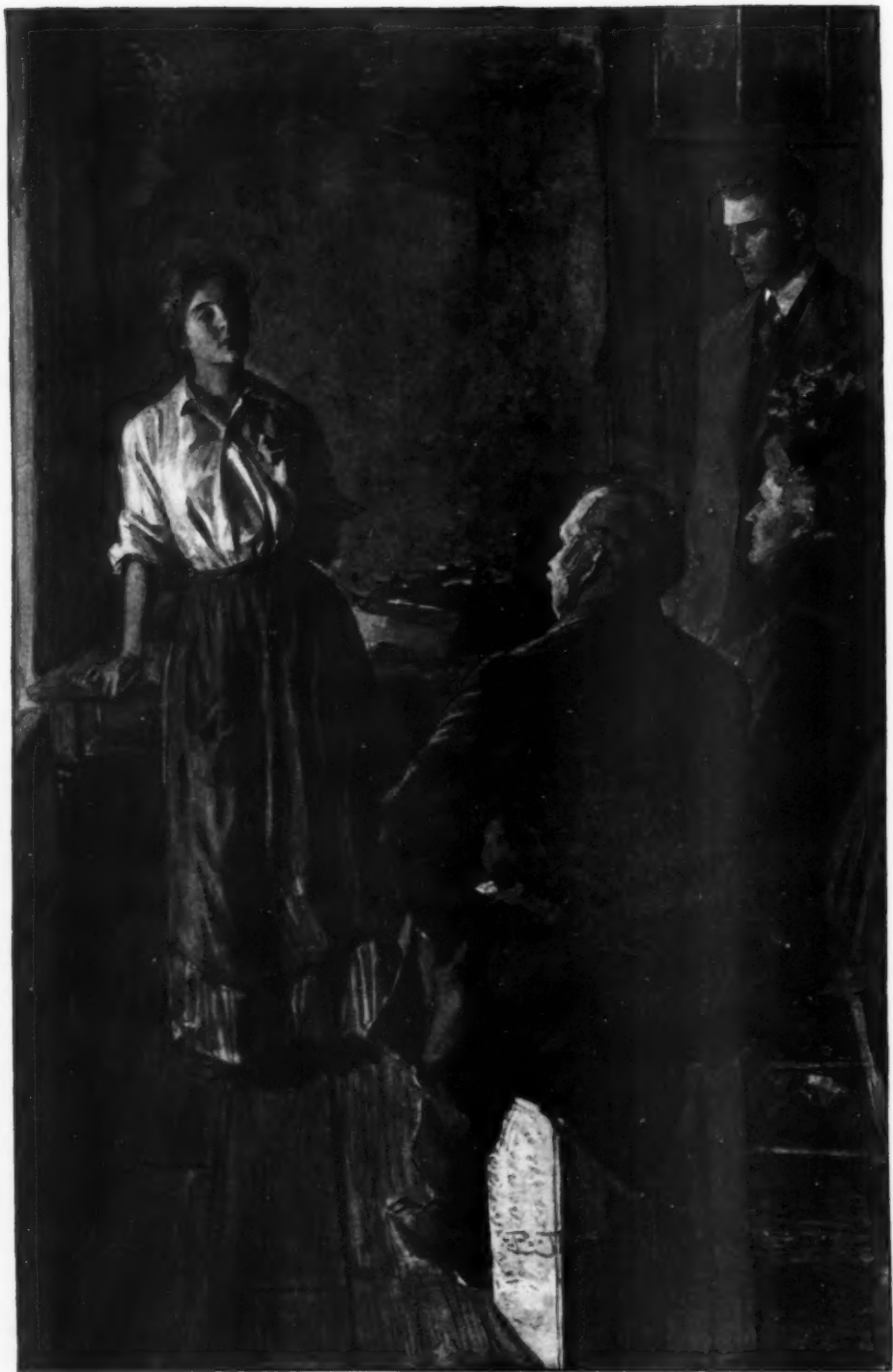
The next day dawned as promisingly as the day before; but when Jean brushed out her hair before her mirror that morning she felt the foreboding which always dogs the heels of a too-ready success. She was therefore in a measure prepared for the unprecedented visit Sandy paid her at lunch time. She ushered him into the boarding-house parlor and steeled herself to hear the worst.

"The game's up!" cried Sandy. "You needn't go down to the Alley again, Jean. It's no use. The Chief's got back from Florida, and this morning he sends up word to cut out all stories about Pineapple Alley—not to run any more charity stuff until he authorizes it!"

"Oh, Sandy—why?"

Sandy sank dejectedly into a chair.

"I don't know, unless it's too near the vulgar earth for our subscribers. It's a shame, Jean! He comes back from sunning himself at Palm Beach and refuses



Miss Murray offered them a chair and an upturned soap-box

to let us help those who have been only half-fed and half-warmed for months. We'd got things started their way, too; in another week we'd have had a popular protest against the old tenements which would have improved them or cleaned them out entirely. Now, it's no use. And I'm down and out, I suppose—"

He stopped as he saw the tears brimming in her eyes. He took her hand contritely.

"Don't you feel bad, dear. The *Despatch* isn't my last hope—"

"Oh, my dear," she said, piteously, "it isn't for you I'm crying. I'm thinking of those people down there. I shall never forget them. It hurts me—here, all the time."

"Yes, I know," he nodded. "At first I was only thinking of getting a story out of them; but now, they've got hold of me, too. It makes me crazy to be so helpless, when they, down there—"

"Sandy! We're not entirely helpless; we've got one more card!"

She sprang to her feet with the light of a divine recklessness in her face.

"I'm going to see your Chief. I'm going to tell him all I know about No. 7, Pineapple Alley. He won't dare to order my head chopped off—"

"No, for I'm going with you!"

"Oh, Sandy! Ought you to? Dare you?"

"Watch me! If this is my swan song I may as well sing it before a select audience. Get your things on and come along."

Barely half-an-hour later the Proprietor and Editor of the *Despatch*, the Big Chief, the Boss, the Old Man—according to the person who spoke of him—adjusted his eye-glasses and looked with polite inquiry at the two young people before him. He vaguely remembered Sandy as one of "my men;" but his interest in him, as in other green young reporters, could only be called dilettanteish. His gaze sharpened the least bit as Sandy explained his connection with the suppressed articles about Pineapple Alley.

"It seemed to us the best way to come to you and ask you to tell us, if you will, sir, why you want them stopped.

They had just begun to attract attention; in another week—"

"Ah, quite so," the Chief interrupted.

He turned towards Jean.

"Are you on the staff, may I ask?"

"No, I am not on the staff, Mr. Sylvester," she replied.

She slipped forward in the big chair he had placed for her and clasped her hands on her knees. There was a pink glow of excitement in her cheeks; her gray eyes regarded him steadily across the polished mahogany of the editorial desk. "I have come with Mr. MacFarlan because I felt sure you didn't understand, or you wouldn't have stopped those stories. Will you let me tell you what I know about that house in Pineapple Alley?"

Mr. Sylvester leaned back in his chair and looked at his fastidiously groomed hands for an instant. Then he said:

"I shall be glad to listen to anything you have to say."

"Thank you; I must begin at the beginning or you will not see where I come in. I am a stenographer. I am engaged to Mr. MacFarlan, and naturally when he told me he wanted something real, with human interest, to write about I wanted to help him. There's a Socialist in our office and he knows the slums better than the people themselves. He said if I wanted realism I must go to No. 7 Pineapple Alley. One day at noon he took me down there. I wasn't much in earnest. I just wanted to find material for Sandy. It seemed only an adventure, you know. Then he introduced me to a girl called Cherry and an old woman. They lived on the fourth floor in two tiny rooms. The old woman is racked with rheumatism and the girl coughs all the time. The walls of their rooms are mouldy with dampness from the water pipes which freeze and burst as soon as the cold weather sets in. They try to help each other and they work when they can, but the afternoon I was there the old woman was evicted because her rent was two weeks overdue, and the girl Cherry tried to kill herself.

"I should have wanted to die if I had lived in those rooms. I could not get them out of my mind. The next day I

went down again. I called myself a maker of artificial flowers; I arranged with the office to let me off for a few afternoons and I rented a room there—I knew it was the only way I could get at the truth—and then I sent for Sandy. He didn't like my being there; but when he saw what I saw—"

Her throat contracted; she rose unconsciously and stood, clasping and unclasping her hands tightly. There was an expression of infinite pity in her face, and her eyes looked beyond the Chief as if she saw over his shoulder all the squalid wretchedness of No. 7 Pineapple Alley.

"You should see that house," she went on. "It was a canning factory before it was turned into a tenement house. It was so badly done that the walls are rotting from defective water pipes and bad plumbing; the cellar is green with mold; on each floor there are three dark rooms which it is worth a healthy person's life to sleep in—but they do sleep and work in them, poor things; and the grown up people are taken to the charity wards with typhoid and the babies die of croup and diphtheria! The rents are collected by an agent. Mr. Larsen says this agent collects for several houses, on commission, so it is to his advantage to get as high a rate as possible and to see that it is paid. It is not good policy for him to carry too many complaints of the tenants to the man who employs him, so in that house only the most necessary repairs are ever made. The tenants never see the owner; when they can't pay their rent they are turned into the street. But it doesn't matter to *him*! Out of that wretched shell of a house he gets \$200 a month—Chris Larsen says that is eighteen per cent on his investment—"

Mr. Sylvester raised a deprecating hand.

"Surely your friend puts the per cent a little high?"

"He couldn't!" she cried, indignantly. "Six per cent would be too high when it is interest on the health and the very lives of the poor things who live down there! The owner ought to be forced to give them better value for their money. If you would print his name."

"But, you see, my dear young lady, that doesn't seem advisable. I am the man who owns the place!"

Like a lamp blown out, the fire in her face gave way to a still, white astonishment. She leaned on the table and looked at him with her dauntless eyes.

"Then you ought to be ashamed! You ought to be ashamed of it!" she whispered.

He flushed thinly; but in his way he was as invincible as she.

"I *am* ashamed," he said, frankly. "Perhaps I should have mentioned the fact earlier; but I wanted some real information about that piece of property. My attention was called to it last night by one of Mr. MacFarlan's stories; and it was given another jog this morning when I received a letter from Mrs. Bronson-Wetherell, who seems to be on my trail."

His ironical smile gave way to a grave respect as he met Jean's eyes.

"I had no doubt of your single-mindedness, Miss Eaton, and it struck me, when you began, that you were going to give me some details my agent seems to have omitted."

Sandy and Jean sat in stricken silence. The reaction had left the girl very pale and limp against the cushions of the big chair. The editor looked at her quizzically.

"You are an excellent advocate, Miss Eaton," he said. "I had rather have you on my side than against me. I am going to take you into my confidence. I haven't seen that Pineapple Alley property in ten years—I'm afraid you'll consider that a poor excuse. But I have a competent lawyer, who employs, as I suppose, competent agents to collect my rents. I am a busy man, with many things to occupy me and I—well, to tell the truth, I had almost forgotten that old tenement house."

He came to a stop and made idle marks on a piece of paper, while they two looked at him with their young hearts in their faces.

"This morning," he went on, at last, "I sent a contractor down there to look over the ground; and I believe I can safely say that by mid-summer there will

be a tenement house on the site of the old one which will please even you!"

Sandy's jaw dropped; but Jean, being a woman, was not so easily rendered speechless. She leaned across the editorial desk, her face rose tinted.

"Oh!" she cried, "it is like a fairy tale. You've only got to wave a wand, haven't you? Will you wave in some good plumbing, and bathtubs, and— oh, please! a place for the children to play. I thought of a playground on the roof—"

"I shall leave those details to you," he said.

"To me!"

"Yes, it seems to me you know quite a little about what those people need. To-morrow I have an architect coming to show me some rough sketches. Will you and Mr. MacFarlan meet him here? It seems to me the three of you could get at what my tenants really need. Then,

when we've put them into a decent house, why, we'll see if they'll be decent themselves."

"Oh, you'll see!" she cried, vividly. "Give them a chance; go to see them sometimes, yourself."

"No, no, thank you!" he said, hastily. "I couldn't go *that* far! When the new building is done, I'm going to offer you the post of collector and Little Sister to Pineapple Alley. Will it please you to accept?"

"Oh!" was all she could say.

He turned to Sandy.

"About those stories you were doing, Mr. MacFarlan. They were interesting reading; and suppose you go on with something along that line—after awhile. Just now, it doesn't seem quite expedient to attack the tenements. You can't expect a man to throw stones at his own glass house, can you?"



"It seems to me you know what those people need"



With water dripping from his garments Henry Waite delivered a speech

Henry Waite's Great Speech

BY HIRAM RICE ROMANS

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN

THE Old Settlers' Reunion, which becomes epidemic in rural communities about the time string beans are ready, and extends through corn-on-the-cob, peach cobbler, and spring chicken seasons until pumpkin pie is ripe, is an institution that requires considerable oratory, and Distinguished Sons of the Old Town are expected to furnish a large proportion of this form of the entertainment. That is as it should be; but unfortunately, all Distinguished Sons are not accustomed to addressing audiences, and occasionally, in endeavoring to secure the Most Distinguished Son as a speaker, the Committee on Arrangements prevails upon one, like Henry Waite, to deliver the Response to the Address of Welcome, and then something unusual happens.

The name of Henry Waite, as you undoubtedly know, is most frequently associated with the fluctuations of railroad stock values in Wall Street reports; some newspapers excoriate him as an unscrupulous railroad grabber, others praise him as a Captain of Industry, but

all credit him with having accumulated a fortune of many millions. You may, therefore, comprehend the excitement in his village birthplace when the Committee on Arrangements announced that Elbow's Most Distinguished Son would deliver the Response to the Address of Welcome at the Old Settlers' Reunion; but to appreciate fully just what happened when he appeared on the speakers' stand in the grove back of town, before the greatest audience that ever greeted a speaker in that portion of the state, it will be necessary to begin with a sketch of Henry Waite's boyhood, and briefly note his career up to the point where he upset all precedents established for the conduct of a highly advertised speaker at an Old Settlers' Reunion.

At the time of Henry Waite's advent into this life his father was the Village Carpenter, Mayor, and Head Elder in the Church. A man of undoubted business ability, he made as much money at his trade as was possible, considering his limited sphere of activity, while as Mayor he exercised his inherent desire to

"run things" temporal, and as Elder of the Church, matters spiritual succeeded or failed, according to his desires.

Henry Waite's mother was a woman of the same kind, and but for the fact that she recognized her husband's as the master mind, there might have been trouble in the Waite family; but if she were Second Mate in her own home, she was High Admiral in affairs feminine of the town, being Queen Bee of the Ladies' Aid; Power Behind the Throne of the local W. C. T. U.; Gossip Censor of the Sewing Circle; Court of Last Resort on all matters in Society Circles, and Majoress Domo of the Women's Relief Corps.

The son of such a pair, it was but natural that Henry Waite should be positive, assertive, and dominant from his toddling days onward, and the little boys and girls with whom he played, all learned in due course to follow his dictates in their childish pastimes.

In school he was studious, learned rapidly, and stood at the head of all his classes, while on the playground he dictated the sports and planned the conduct of his juvenile associates. He ordered older and larger boys about with a freedom that, under ordinary circumstances, would have incited many a fight; but those who thought of disputing or questioning his authority, apparently took it out in thinking. Perhaps it was a case of mind over matter—but that is a problem for the psychologist; however, the time came when the Dictator was dethroned, and then it was a case of matter triumphing over the mind. (The psychologist will please take notice and report.)

Henry Waite was about fourteen years of age when a family named Flannigan moved to the thriving village of Elbow. The father of the family was a mason, a man of muscular build, sandy hair, some freckles, a nose short enough to show that he found his own affairs sufficient to occupy his attention, and it had, moreover, an upward tilt that indicated trouble for anyone who might seek to help him look after matters that he thought concerned him alone. There was a Mrs. Flannigan and several Flanniganettes.

From the latter we will detach one for more special notice, inasmuch as it was he who put skids under Henry Waite's Dictatorship, removing the Youthful Autocrat suddenly and completely, but at the same time unwittingly starting him on his career to fame and fortune.

Dennis Flannigan was the same age as Henry Waite, and he looked as much like his father as a boy of fourteen can possibly resemble a man of fifty. Henry was young in experience, and his authority never having been questioned, he could not be expected to know that the tilt of a boy's nose, size of his biceps, and color of his hair, coupled with the name of Flannigan, were factors to be considered when issuing a ukase.

The family had been in the town just long enough for Mrs. Flannigan to borrow a cup of sugar from the lady to the North, and to tell the lady to the South how many of the children had had the measles, whooping cough, and other infantile diseases, and hear in return that the Waite family constituted the Great White Light of the village, when Henry and Dennis came together.

The trouble arose during a ball game, where, as all must know, it may be had for the seeking. Dennis having asserted that he was somewhat of a pitcher, was assigned that position by the youthful dictator; but whether from a case of "rattles" or just plain incompetency, he failed to please the arbiter of all things boyish in that town, and was verbally ejected from the game. I say verbally, because he refused to be ejected physically, there being a short exchange of words appropriate to the occasion, followed by a sudden onslaught by the young Irishman that upset all precedents in that village and Henry Waite at the same time.

When the youth came to his senses sufficiently to recall that it was not a cyclone or mule kick that he had encountered, he evinced no haste about getting to his feet, using the time in analyzing the situation, which was entirely new to him. Judging from the attitudes assumed by his antagonist and the remarks he was making, it was clear that Henry Waite,

Late Dictator of Boyville, could have more of the same kind if he would but step up to the scratch; but he appeared to know that enough was amply sufficient, and realizing that he was no match for the boy with the freckled fists, he scrambled to his feet, and without a word of reply, withdrew from the scene of defeat to his home.

It must be stated that the game of ball was not finished, so great was the excitement following the short and decisive battle, but the event was discussed at many a supper table that evening, and an earthquake or some other dire calamity was freely predicted by those who bent the knee at the Waite throne. As for the Waites themselves, they held a family conclave, and not knowing what else to do, resolved to treat the affront to the family with dignified reserve; however, the future standing of the Flannigans in the community was decided upon and passed out through the official purveyor of village gossip, and the matter was supposed to be ended.

It was, until the next morning, when the following note was found on the Waite breakfast table:

DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:

It is absolutely impossible for a boy of my temperament to remain here without thrashing Dennis Flannigan. This I cannot do now so I feel that I must leave town. I am going to board a freight train that passes through here at midnight and go to the city, where I will get a position. As soon as I am located, I'll take boxing instructions, and when I know I can whip Dennis I'll return and do it. Will write when I arrive, and you will hear from me regularly.

Your Determined Son,
HENRY.

Mrs. Waite brushed away a tear as her husband's jaws clicked in a manner that indicated pride in his son's determination to turn defeat into victory, and that he felt confident the affair would be terminated with honor to the family name. To the public they showed an unruffled demeanor, in keeping with their exalted position, but Dennis Flannigan had knocked a prop from under their throne, and the domination of the Waite family was threatened.

Acting upon the suggestion of a brakeman, whose acquaintance he formed while "beating his way" to the city, Henry decided to apply for a position as Office Boy at the main office of the railroad whose hospitality he had surreptitiously enjoyed, and was fortunate in being accepted at once.

In the hurry and bustle of the city, the thousand and one things to see, not to mention the work attending his position, the boy, strange to say, neglected his prime object in going to the city; only the letters from home recalled it; but he was so busy—next week, or next month surely, he would find time to take lessons in the manly art of self-defense, and prepare to return home and wreak his revenge upon Dennis Flannigan. A spell of homesickness almost sent him back unprepared for conflict, but his decision to seek at once an instructor in boxing was forestalled by a promotion that brought him new duties and responsibilities; and thus the weeks ran into months, and the months into years. The country boy developed into a marvel, and climbed the ladder of importance in the offices of the Bent, Zigzag & Crooked Railroad so rapidly that he would have entirely forgotten the town of his birth but for the fact that his father and mother still lived there.

Ten years wound themselves upon the ball of time, and as the son's star continued to rise in the railway heavens, that of his parents sank in the home town firmament. Perceiving the handwriting on the wall, the Waites sold out and joined their son in the city, whereupon the people of Elbow proceeded forthwith to treat the family as a memory.

The romantic marriage of Henry Waite to a daughter of the President of the Bent, Zigzag & Crooked Railroad, was followed shortly afterward by his elevation to the position of General Passenger Agent of the line, and when his name appeared at the bottom of a new time-card posted in the station at Elbow, there was ample reason for the proverbial nine days' sensation; and from that time on the editor of the *Elbow Times* scanned the railroad news in

the dailies and kept the community posted on the doings and sayings of "Elbow's Distinguished Son," not forgetting, of course, to put his name on the subscription list as a "D. H."

And Henry Waite?

Well, if you think a country boy who goes to the city, achieves success, marries a millionaire's daughter, and gets into a position where he can juggle the stock of a railroad, has time to read the home paper and keep track of what is going on in the old town, you are quite, quite wrong.

In the course of time a son and daughter were born to him, but being able to employ a corps of paregoric experts, their advent did not break in upon his nocturnal peace; the occurrence is mentioned simply to show that Henry Waite was checking off a few mile stones. Later on his father and mother were laid away in a marble mausoleum, and as the steel door of the vault clicked, the last link that connected his mind with the place of his birth was shattered.

His father-in-law passed away, and Henry Waite became President of the Bent, Zigzag & Crooked Railroad. The force of mind and will that was developed by his dominance over his playmates, and which caused him to be advanced from Office Boy to President, made him a man to be reckoned with in the financial world. With the Bent, Zigzag & Crooked Railway safely stowed away in his private vault, figuratively speaking, he reached out for other railroads, fighting with millions and brains as his weapons until he became the uncrowned king of finance, and the master of a network of railroads that spanned the country.

And so we come, at last, to that day when the Committee on Arrangements for the Old Settlers' Reunion at Elbow called at his office in New York and succeeded, after much difficulty, in passing the inspection of a number of clerks and being escorted to the Throne Room of the Great Henry Waite.

"Mr. Adams and Mr. Johnson," announced the Private Secretary, pausing deferentially to await his master's pleasure.

For fully two minutes the Private Secretary stood rigid, while the visitors, not being versed in the etiquette of the occasion, and acting on intuition entirely, moistened their lips and shifted their weight from one foot to the other. Finally, when it suited his convenience, the Great One, without removing his gaze from some papers he was inspecting, inquired:

"Their business?"

"Strictly a private matter, to which you alone can attend."

"Very well, Perkins, you may go. Now, gentlemen?" he inquired, turning to the travel stained pair, who stood with hats and valises in hand.

"I am John Adams, Mayor of Elbow," said one of the men, depositing his valise upon the floor and advancing with a confidence of being recognized that indicated plainly his rural environment when at home.

"Elbow?" echoed the great man. "New York, Ohio, Illinois, Montana, or Texas?" he inquired in another breath.

The Mayor's confidence vanished, and consternation took its place; Henry Waite had not only forgotten him, but had evidently forgotten his birthplace!

Oh, blame him not, reader! A man who juggles railroads as a business, who has a multi-millionaire society queen as a wife, a daughter sought in marriage by a titled foreigner, and a son who is infatuated with half a dozen chorus-girls at one time, has more on his mind than trying to remember the name of the town where he was born.

The Mayor gulped down his disappointment, glanced imploringly at Mr. Johnson, as if he feared that gentleman would cut and run, leaving him to break through the icy reception alone, and then blurted out:

"Elbow, Ohio — where you were born!"

Another glance at Mr. Johnson reassured him that his companion was evidently going to remain for further developments, and the Mayor was cheered.

The Great Man removed his piercing gaze from the Mayor's face and directed it toward that official's valise. His Honor

traced out this line of vision, and immediately felt sorry his clothes receptacle was such a shabby affair; but, he reflected, it was too late now to remedy the matter. Then he glanced at the Railroad Magnate, who was idly twiddling a great diamond ring, and felt relieved, for he perceived that though the man of millions was gazing in the direction of the dilapidated valise, he was in reality looking far, far beyond it—back into a haze of years.

"We—" began the Mayor, to whom the silence had become embarrassing.

"Ah, yes; certainly! My birthplace!" ejaculated Henry Waite, his mind coming back from its excursion into the past. "Glad to know you, Mr. Adams," he said, rising and shaking the Mayor's hand with a warmth of greeting that entirely dissipated that worthy official's embarrassment. "And you, too, Mr. Johnson. Be seated, gentlemen. Glad to have you call. Haven't seen anyone from Elbow for—um-m—twenty-five years, anyway. And so you are Mayor of the old town, Mr. Adams? Lived there long?"

"Merciful stewpans!" thought the Mayor. "He doesn't recognize me, even after I told him my name."

Just then, in a mirror opposite, he caught a glimpse of a short, rotund, bald-headed man, with a lambrequin of gray whiskers decorating the submaxillary and flowing down toward the top vest button, and he reflected it didn't look much like the boy who used to be Henry Waite's staunch lieutenant.

"I'm 'Stumpy' Adams," said the Mayor, a sheepish grin illuminating his countenance.

"'Stumpy' Adams," echoed the Magnate, gazing vacantly at the Mayor; "'Stumpy' Adams!"

He was going back through Memory's pages, thumbing them as one does the pages of a book when hunting for some particular passage; but oh, there were so many pages in his memory book; pages written with events that had startled the commercial world! What if the one containing the name of "Stumpy" Adams had been torn out to make room for something deemed more important!

But no! at last he found it! There was a flash of recognition from those piercing eyes, a smile jerked the stern corners of his mouth upward, and he grasped the Mayor's hand again.

"'Stumpy' Adams! Why, of course! How stupid of me not to remember you! And this must be 'Chicky' Johnson," he laughed, as he clasped the hand of the Mayor's companion, and that gentleman almost swallowed his Adam's-apple in delight at being thus recognized.

"Well, well, well!" ejaculated Mr. Waite, beaming with the pleasure of recollection, "this is certainly a grand reunion, boys!"

"Grand Reunion!" oh, happy cue for His Honor, the Mayor of Elbow, and e'en as the Early Bird snapped up the inert Worm, the alert Executive grasped the opportunity made for him to state the object of their visit.

"Henry," he said, "we are going to have an Old Settlers' Reunion at Elbow, and Charley and I came all the way down here just to ask you to attend and deliver the Response to the Address of Welcome."

"Well, it would be a pleasure to go back and see the old town again, but I can't spare the time."

"Oh, just a day or two," urged Mr. Johnson, finding his voice.

"A day or two! That would be impossible! The best I could think of doing would be to drop in on the noon train and leave on the evening train. I presume I would see many changes," commented Mr. Waite.

"No doubt you would; but they have taken place so gradually that it doesn't seem so to us. Most of the old landmarks are gone; the town has been incorporated; we have pretty good sidewalks, and we hope some time to build a town hall."

"Haven't you a Town Hall yet? Why, that was one of the projects talked of when I was a boy!"

"Still talking about it, Henry; still talking of it," replied the Mayor. "Last spring we voted on a proposition to bond the town for \$1,000 to build the hall, but lost out."

"You couldn't build much of a hall



His name appeared at the bottom of a new time-card

for \$1,000," said the Great Man. "Here, take \$4,000 and build a good one," he added, with a burst of generosity that mystified his visitors until they saw him grasp his check-book and write therein a few lines.

The Mayor and Mr. Johnson shook hands and patted each other on the shoulder, while the Railroad Magnate was blotting the valuable piece of paper, and then they squeezed his hand until it ached, patted him on the back, hailing him as a Prince of Generosity and Elbow's Good Angel.

"Now you must come, Henry," urged the Mayor. "You just *must* come," he repeated, by way of emphasis, and Mr. Johnson echoed those words, parrot-like. "We can't have the Hall ready for dedication, but we'll lay the corner stone while you are there. Why, Henry, it will be the greatest day in the history of Elbow."

"I'll do it, boys!" declared the Great

Man, whacking his desk with a clenched fist to emphasize his determination. "If the stock of every railroad in the country drops ten points, I'll let it drop and go anyhow!"

"Hurrah!" cried the Mayor.

"Hurrah!" echoed Mr. Johnson, jumping to his feet and executing a brief, awkward, but enthusiastic *pas seul*, at which boyish exhibition of pleasure he was about to feel ashamed, when to his astonishment the Great Henry Waite grabbed him and Mayor Adams by the hands, and the three capered around the Mayor's old valise, using a variety of steps that would have made a hit at any country dance and completely shocked the dignified Mr. Perkins, had he chanced to come into the room.

Two days later, when Mayor Adams and Mr. Johnson stepped from Henry Waite's private car at Elbow Station, the town experienced a sensation that

completely paralyzed business and upset domestic routine, for the women were just as much interested as the men. Even the Town Pessimist stopped whittling at a storebox and joined the crowd that gathered around the Mayor and his companion to hear them tell and retell of the munificence of Henry Waite, and how he entertained them in his great marble mansion.

At last the Great Day came, and the weather Man himself must have been one of Elbow's Distinguished Sons, for never before had he furnished a more perfect day for an Old Settlers' Reunion. The good citizens of Elbow were up early, but not early enough to greet the first arrivals, and all forenoon the crowds poured in from every direction.

When Henry Waite stepped from his private car he landed in the midst of a cheering multitude, through which the Village Marshal was almost forced to club a lane to the carriage that was awaiting the Distinguished Guest; and then he was stopped every six inches to shake hands with Somebody, his Wife and Little Johnny. Even when seated in the best carriage the village afforded, and waiting for the procession to start, excited people climbed up the wheels to shake his hand, and then held Little Johnny up so in after days he could boast of having been patted upon the head by the Great Henry Waite.

The trip to the grove was one grand, triumphal procession, the people being lined along the curbstone at least a dozen deep, cheering and waving hats as the Great Man passed.

The great crowd in the grove talked, laughed, and amused itself while the Elbow Silver Cornet Band played, while a Distinguished Son, now a famous D. D., offered a scholarly invocation, and even while the most eloquent orator of the county made the Address of Welcome, but there was an awesome hush when Mayor Adams stepped to the front and announced that the Response to the Address of Welcome would be delivered by Elbow's Most Distinguished Son, a man who held the same position in the business world that the President of the

United States held in the civic world. He told how that man was once a bare-foot boy in Elbow, and how he had climbed to the topmost round of the Ladder of Success, from which dizzy eminence he surveyed the whole world below him.

As Henry Waite arose from his seat, the vast crowd stood up with him, and opening up its mouth, cheered until the leaves in the trees above it fluttered, and frightened birds flew chattering away. For fully two minutes the Lion of the Day stood smiling at the great demonstration in his honor, then as the cheers died down and the audience resumed its seats, he advanced to the speaker's stand.

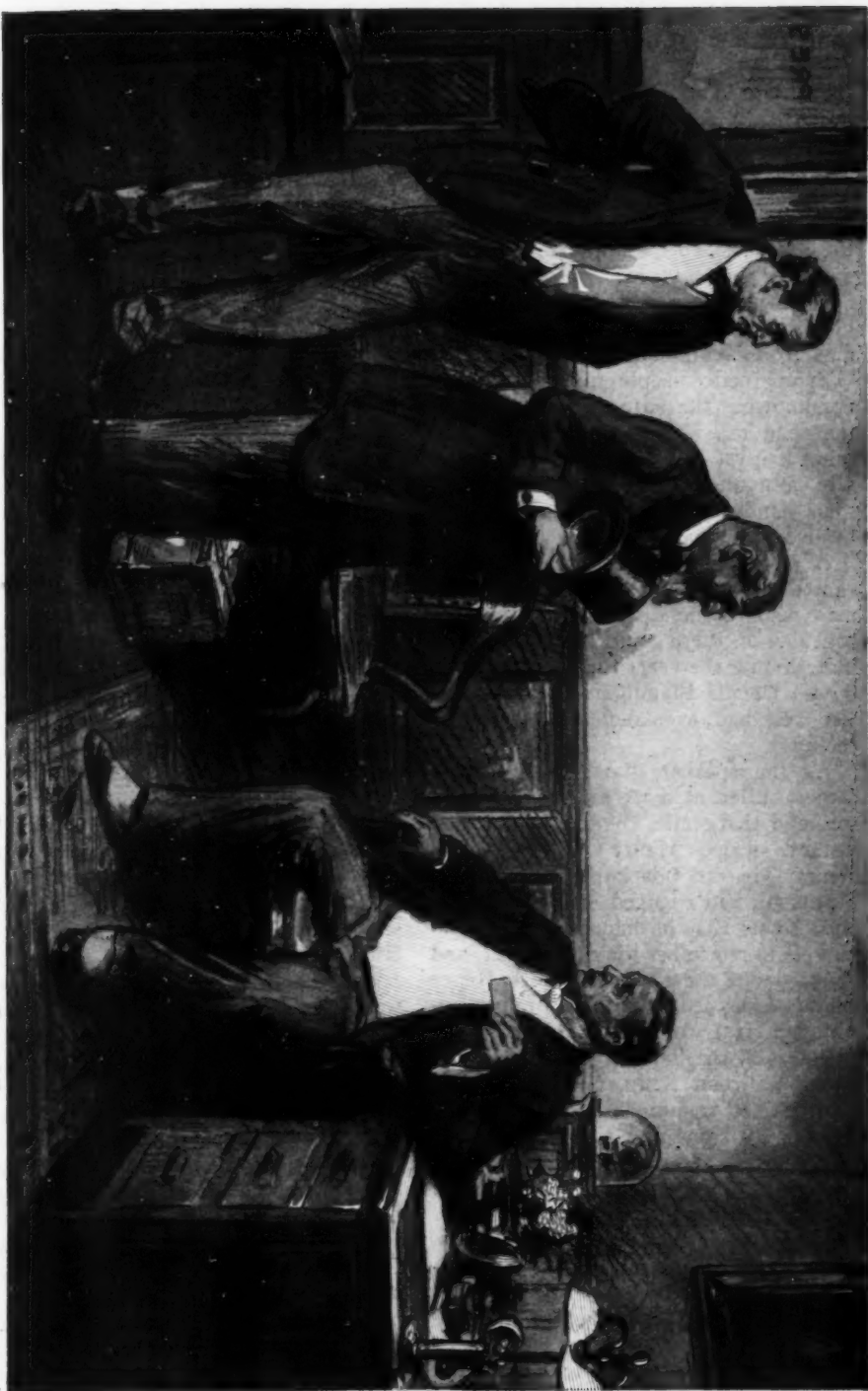
"Mr. Mayor," he began, bowing to that functionary; "Friends of Elbow and Community," he continued, bowing to the audience; then, as the trained speaker is wont to do, he paused and let his eyes roam across the sea of faces in front of him.

Alas, that he took that glance! for in the third row, on the aisle leading directly to where he stood, sat a strongly-built, sandy-haired, freckle-faced, pug-nacious-nosed boy of about fourteen, the mere sight of whom suddenly carried Henry Waite's memory back over a stretch of forty years to the time the prototype of that boy had "licked" him. He thought of the vow he had made and how it had slipped away from his mind as position and wealth had come his way. Then, under the spell of Memory, he forgot his present greatness, forgot he was there to deliver a speech, forgot all but that one eternal vow! He was a boy again, standing there with clenched fists and heaving bosom, enduring the insult heaped upon him by his conqueror.

A discreet cough from the Mayor aroused the Great Man from his distressing reverie. He recovered himself with a start, and blushed as he realized the awkward pause he had made. Like a flash came the thought: "That was forty years ago; the boy is Dennis Flannigan's son; the father may be dead." The polished man of great affairs was himself again in an instant.

"Pardon my abstraction, friends," he said, a depth of feeling modulating his

"Elbow?" echoed the great man, "New York, Ohio, Illinois, Montana, or Texas?"



words. "Absorbed for years in business cares, thoughts of the old town have been blotted out; but now, with those cares laid aside, and standing here in this grove where I played as a boy, the rush of memories is overwhelming. Just now I saw a face in the crowd that took me back forty years to an incident."

Instinctively the speaker's eyes sought the son of Dennis Flannigan, and as he scanned that upturned, freckled face, his voice died to a whisper, and again his mind went back to that vow he had made forty years before.

Sympathetic people in the audience, not knowing the nature of the memory that had overwhelmed him, and imagining it must be one that would eventually cause unbidden tears to flow, got out their handkerchiefs and waited for him to give the signal.

A movement on the part of the boy caused Henry Waite to glance at the man who sat beside him, and there he beheld—oh, there could be no mistaking him, despite the years that had passed—it was Dennis Flannigan, the only person who had ever defied him without rueing it.

As the speaker glared at him, the father smiled at a remark made by his son, and that smile, coming just at that instant, drove Henry Waite into a frenzy. He did not know that Dennis Flannigan had engaged in so many boyhood fights that he had never bothered himself to remember their encounter, and obsessed with the memory himself, Henry Waite imagined that his only unwhipped rival was gloating over the incident! Oh, the indignity of it! He, the Great Railroad King, at whose frown Wall Street trembled; at whose word millionaires came and went as so many office boys; at whose feet legislators scrambled for favor; he—Henry Waite—was being laughed at by a poor, uneducated country mason! By all the gods, he would not stand it! He would vindicate his honor if the heavens fell!

With a bound that startled the immense audience, he paused at the edge of the platform to proclaim to Elbow and the world that the hour of his vindication had come.

"Dennis Flannigan!" he yelled in a tone that brought that surprised individual to his feet. "Forty years ago you gave me the only thrashing I ever had! When I left home in consequence thereof I swore I'd never come back until I could lick you! I'm here, and I'm going to keep my oath!"

With a spring like a panther he landed within five feet of his old-time foe; but Dennis, awed by the greatness of the man, and utterly startled out of his wits by such an unlooked-for proceeding, did something an Irishman had never done before—turned tail and ran as if his life depended upon his speed.

Up through the crowd raced the country mason, with Henry Waite, just described by Mayor Adams as the second man of importance in the nation, reaching for his coat-tail; he barely touched his hand on the top of a six-rail worm fence as he went over, and as his feet hit the ground, Henry Waite was in the air just behind him. Twenty rods of that fence went down with a crash as a thousand people tried to get over it at one time. A hundred more with torn clothes and smashed hats scrambled from the struggling mass of humanity and arrived at the top of the hill in time to see Dennis Flannigan leap lightly from the bank at the foot of the hill to the trunk of a tree that had fallen across the creek. Another detachment came up in time to see Henry Waite slip from that tree trunk into the creek, and the cry of horror that went up caused Dennis, who was in the act of scrambling up the bank on the opposite side, to turn and look back.

Fifty men started on a run down the hill-side to aid the Railroad Magnate, who was plainly in distress, his clothing having caught on some branches in such a way as to hold him tightly in imminent danger of drowning. Before his would-be rescuers could reach the creek bank Dennis, having realized his pursuer's predicament, and not caring to be the innocent cause of a tragedy that would startle the world, had run back across the tree trunk, let himself down into the water and torn loose the multi-millionaire's garments; then, getting a foothold

on a submerged branch, he grasped his sputtering foe and boosted him up so he could crawl back to safety, after which he climbed out himself.

By the time the two dripping men had reached the bank the entire reunion crowd had moved from the grove to the hillside that sloped down to the creek, and Mayor Adams was in the foreground, flanked by his worthy lieutenant, Mr. Johnson, and many of the Distinguished Sons of Elbow. There was an awkward pause at this point, for no one seemed to know whether the next number on the program would be a fight or another footrace; however, Dennis settled the matter very happily by mounting a stump and saying:

"Well, friends, according to all the rules, when a man runs he's licked. We'll let it go at that, and the Honorable Henry Waite will now deliver the Response to the Address of Welcome."

A roar of cheers followed this announcement, and Henry Waite was helped up beside Dennis. The two men

shook hands amid more cheers, and then, with water dripping from his soaked garments, Henry Waite delivered a speech that carried his audience from cheers to tears, and from tears back to cheers; after which, with his arm linked in that of Dennis Flannigan, he marched with the crowd to the Town Hall site and assisted in laying the corner stone of that long-wished-for edifice.

He had gone to Elbow to stay three hours, but he stayed three days; and it was only when the Elbow telegraph operator, who was also ticket agent, freight agent, baggage-man and station janitor, was completely swamped with important messages that poured in from all quarters of the nation, that Elbow's Distinguished Son brought his visit to a close.

In ending this narrative, it might be mentioned that if you happen to hear, some day, that Dennis Flannigan, Jr., is an important railroad official, don't be surprised, as Henry Waite took the boy with him when he left Elbow.

The Same Emotions

BY EDITH MENLALL TAYLOR

ILLUSTRATED BY W. H. D. KOERNER

WITH a final lunge the *Trinidad* wrenched away from her dock. The town of Pictou began to recede, and Miss Allen on the stern deck gave a contented sigh as she settled into her steamer chair. Ahead of her was the yet undiscovered Strait of Northumberland and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, with the beautiful wild coast of Gaspé, and the Perce rock awaiting her. Winchester Strong had described them to her over and over again. Winchester had promised to take her there on their wedding journey, but that journey had never materialized. Perhaps he took Marion Haskell there—Miss Allen had never heard where they went. It was all a good while ago; and it was

only the fact that Mrs. Pousland had suggested that the journey which they were planning together should lie through these waters that brought Winchester to the fore again.

Poor old Winchester!

How well Estelle Allen remembered his faults and his virtues. He was going to be so famous, but somehow or other his voice hadn't pleased very well. A voice cultivator in New York was not what Winchester had always expected to be.

Two West Indian sailors rolled by with coils of rope in their hands. The *Trinidad* went to Bermuda in winter. One of these blacks was wearing an old

pair of patent leather shoes. Estelle wondered to whom they had belonged in their glory. Then her thoughts went back to Winchester Strong.

No, decidedly he had expected higher things to fall to his lot for the asking. And it was rather strange to her that they hadn't. He was handsome and magnetic, and every one liked him. She always believed he could act, too, and he understood the art of singing completely. Then there were his ideals. Winchester had had as complete an outfit of ideals as any man Estelle Allen had ever met.

The wind was blowing strongly now that the ship was getting offshore. Estelle, who had been baked in the city and on railway trains, gave a shiver, and drew a coat about her which she had brought up on deck with her when, with the laudable intention of leaving Mrs. Pousland room enough to turn round in, she had fled the stateroom just before the *Trinidad* sailed.

How old was Winchester, anyway?

Winchester must be all of forty now, for she was thirty-two. It was terrifying the way time flew. Every year it got worse and worse. Winchester had one great mark of beauty; she remembered well his fine white hands, manly and yet white. He had a trick of spreading the fingers on a chair arm or a rail so that they showed to their best advantage.

She tugged at the sleeves of the heavy coat, last year's coat which had been laid away in camphor in May before she decided to go to Quebec with Mrs. Pousland. Mercy, what was that? Rat, tat, tat. Something was dropping and rolling all over the deck. Estelle looked down at the pocketful of moth balls gayly scampering across the deck in the direction of a pair of well shod feet. Then she looked up and saw, standing braced for the onslaught, a tall young man with thick curly hair and humorous blue eyes. Below these was a very ultra white woolen waistcoat across which in what seemed like a mock heroic gesture was displayed a well knit white hand—Winchester Strong's hand with the old gesture. She had never thought of another pair of hands like his as existent.

"I beg your pardon," said the young

man, "but I capitulate at once. May I return the ammunition to you?"

"I should advise an immediate retreat. I still have a good many bullets," Miss Allen replied with a demure smile, taking a handful of moth balls from another pocket and showing it.

The young stranger came through the roaming balls and held out his hand.

"Can't I shake your coat over the rail for you?" he asked.

Estelle slipped out of the coat and allowed him to do the service he had suggested.

"You are very kind," she murmured. "It had been put away for the summer."

After he had shaken the coat for her the young man folded it back so that he could read the label inside. As he did this a look of amused interest appeared on his face.

"There, I don't think that will give you any further trouble now," he said, and bowing, he returned the coat and passed on.

Estelle drew her eyebrows together. What did his reply suggest? Something, but too intangible to grasp whatever it was.

Estelle held the coat a moment before she put it on, and its Starbird & Saylor label caught her eyes.

I must get a suit early this year, she thought. I'm glad he went along. It was much better taste. How very much he brought back Winchester. I wonder if he is an actor or a singer. Oh, here's Mollie.

Mrs. Pousland's plump form was just stepping up on the top deck, a little blown from the exertion of climbing the steep stairs alone. Her near-sighted gaze wandered helplessly about until Estelle called her name. Then she came lumbering over the course taken by the stranger. The moth balls were by this time making quiet but persistent efforts to surmount the rail which prevented them from launching themselves upon the Strait of Northumberland and preserving the coats of the white seals advertised by the Quebec S. S. Co. in their folder.

Estelle pointed.

"Look, my dear," she said gayly. "Behold the objects which a good-looking

young stranger has kindly shaken from the pockets of my traveling coat."

Mrs. Pousland squinted at the little white balls running forward eagerly, and then, frustrated by the board, rolling back.

"Moth balls!" Of all things! What have you been doing up here, Estelle? Tell me at once," she said, comfortably.

They were a curious pair of companions, but Estelle chose to travel with Mollie Pousland because she was a skillful traveler and had a fat, comfortable disposition, and was old enough to be proud of a charming accessory like Estelle herself. In travel, Mollie Pousland took all the uncomfortable things and Estelle had the best.

Estelle reached backward with her right arm and drew Mrs. Pousland's chair up to a level with her own.

"Sit down and I'll tell you about it," she said.

The other fitted herself into the chair with the precision of one who has thoroughly mastered the possibilities of a steamer chair, and finally turned to Estelle with the air of being ready to hear her story.

Estelle told it with dramatic tech-



"May I stay?" he asked anxiously

nique. As she ended Mrs. Pousland remarked with exaggerated resignation:

"All of which makes it perfectly clear to me, my dear, that during the next three days I shall have no responsibility for your entertainment."

Estelle laughed. Her laugh was a peculiarly musical one.

"Make haste slowly to such a conclusion," she returned.

As she spoke her eyes roamed to the

flat green coast of Prince Edward's Island, and the two parlor-sized light-houses on the water's edge. After a moment's silence she said:

"Mollie, he is so much like Winchester Strong that it startled me."

Mrs. Pousland glanced across at her with more real interest than she had shown.

"Is he? How?"

"I don't know how. That's the odd part of it. But it's there. He's tall and Winchester was short, and he has blue eyes and brown curly hair, and you remember how dark Winchester was. But Mollie, there's something queer about it to me. He *seemed* like Winchester."

"Why do women always speak of the men they have broken their engagements with in the past tense, Estelle?" her friend asked, irrelevantly.

"I don't know. Do they? I think he has the same temperamental traits as Winchester," said Estelle returning to her own line of thought.

"Do you ever wish you had married him — Winchester, I mean?" Mollie asked.

Estelle shook her head.

"No," she replied gravely, "I loved him, and since then no man has ever pleased me. But if I had married him, Mollie, if I had married him at his age, he would have mastered my will or we would have separated. Marion rules him. She is phlegmatic and persistent. I think he has failed of a great success chiefly through the fact that she has been the dominating factor, not he."

"Marriage is so much more simple than you imagine, Estelle."

"It wouldn't have been for me."

"Well, you see, Estelle, your men friends have always had what you call temperament. You have known professional men, and you ought to marry a business man. That's a very different matter."

"I agree with you that it is a different matter, Mollie. You forget James Price. He used to come to the house a good deal when my mother was living. She always liked to hear where his different cars of wheat and grain were sidetracked and how many days the railroad was going

to allow him to manipulate them. I didn't. I used to dream about the stuff mildewing, or getting hitched to the wrong train and going to Mexico." She stretched out her hands with a sweeping gesture. "Business bores me. Oh, how it bores me, Mollie Pousland."

Mrs. Pousland had one of her rare moments of insight.

"If you loved the man as much as you are capable of loving a man," she said, "you would go downtown to his office and do his accounts and typewriting and enjoy it. Mark my words."

Estelle shrugged her shoulders expressively.

"Never," she cried. "Look down the length of the boat. There is my acquaintance of the moth balls talking to the man with glasses."

Mrs. Pousland took out her lorgnettes and turned them on the young man. As she replaced them she said:

"He is young and good-looking."

"Yes," returned Estelle, but with a sudden loss of interest. "Do read me something, Mollie."

Meantime, Roger Watson detached himself from his chance acquaintance in the prow and settled himself in his own chair, from which he could see Estelle and her companion in the distance.

The coat which he had shaken for her was his favorite among last year's models. He remembered looking it over when it came into his sample room, and being so particularly pleased with it that he doubled his order immediately. No other house in New York had come into competition with him, either, in the case of this model. Nor was that all. Very clearly he now recalled passing through the department one day and noticing a woman trying on one of the coats there before a glass. He had given her a casual glance at first, but a second one with a sense of impersonal satisfaction. The coat was so absolutely the right thing on the right person. The lines were perfect. And she had evidently known it, for here she was with the coat.

Roger stretched himself comfortably. Was she a regular customer?

Who was she?



"Can't I shake your coat over the rail for you?" he asked

It was clear to him that in the three years he had worked for Starbird & Saylor she had not frequented the cloak department anyway. He was about it so much himself that he was pretty thoroughly acquainted with the regular customers. Then his thoughts traveled on for the time being to himself.

Every one said he had done well; that he had met the crash in the family finances bravely; and his success (as he put it to himself "for a kid") was unusual. How he had worked in the last eight years! What battles he had had with himself! It was galling, grinding to a boy brought up amid every luxury that money could secure, and people of fine ideals and broad culture to be thrown with the sort of people that largely constitute his life to-day.

And the customers.

Of course he was obliged to come into personal relations with them often. It

was disillusioning to see the side of women the superintendent of a coat department chiefly saw. If it hadn't been for his mother and sisters, Roger would have lost all respect for the other sex after eight years.

Eight years ago he had gone into O'Connell's as a boy. He was just seventeen then, almost ready for college. He had already written a few poems in the magazines and a symbolistic prose poem about spring that a good publisher had nearly published. He was going to write plays, and if his mother could be won over, be an actor. He was sure it was in him to be a great one in time.

Ah, but those eight years he had eaten his heart out! They were all on their feet now; the girls were married and his father was getting on. Edward, his older brother, had succeeded and soon would be married. Was it too late for him now after all?

He studied the toe of his shapely shoe and the blue silk stripe in his black silk hosiery.

Yes. It was. He meant to have a shop of his own in ten years from now. Meant it and would have it. His children when he married should have what he had had—governesses and ponies and every conceivable juvenile joy.

Here the girl up the deck in the Starbird & Saylor coat stood up and its folds fell about her. It caught his eye again, and he watched her as she stood talking to Mrs. Pousland. Surely the wearer of the coat was a very fascinating woman—his mother's sort. He would like to know her a lot; but she would not want to know him if she knew what he did for a living. Restlessly he wriggled his foot. He also got up. As he did so the bugle blew for luncheon.

When he had reached the fish stage, and the fresh, pink salmon had arrived, Estelle quietly slipped into the chair next his own, and Mrs. Pousland settled into the one beyond that. There was a moment's awkward pause and then Estelle turned and said, smilingly:

"I understand they catch the salmon fresh every day on this voyage. Do you think it can be so?"

Roger laughed and made some reply. He was fascinated by the way her yellow hair curled over her forehead in rebellious curls, slipping out from under a very tidy net. Mrs. Pousland leaned forward and took up the conversation, and the ball rolled merrily on through the meal, shy glances from the two raw college lads from Toronto and the young purser occasionally turned toward the trio.

It followed naturally after luncheon that Mr. Watson should arrange their chairs and wraps for them, and he asked permission to fetch his own steamer chair and finish a conversation begun at the dessert course about his sister Maud, the singer, whose romantic marriage to an Italian whom Mrs. Pousland knew seemed to him to be the equivalent of a formal presentation of his credentials.

After a time, however, Mollie's afternoon nap claimed her. Roger rose and

stood doubtfully beside his chair as she lumbered away.

"May I stay?" he asked anxiously.

Estelle smiled. "Oh do," she returned.

"You've no idea," she went on as he sank down again, "how good this seems to me. I was tired out when I left New York. I wanted to go to Europe with my cousin from Washington, who was going with a dramatic critic, but my firm wouldn't come to time about it. And I want to get on, so I felt I couldn't afford to leave them in the lurch. It's our busy season soon. I chose this as the best substitute I could find which would not take more than two weeks."

So he was neither an actor nor a singer. Estelle's lips twitched. *He was in business.*

"What is your business?" she asked.

The young man colored slowly. Then he gallantly met the worst.

"I buy the coats for Starbird & Saylor. I bought that coat you have on."

Estelle saw and understood the blush. She felt that his honesty had been fine.

"Isn't that interesting," she said. "Now I know why you handled it so affectionately, and why your remark to me made me feel suddenly as if I were being pacified about an unsatisfactory purchase."

He laughed, relieved now that the truth was out.

"Did I make you feel like that?"

"Yes," she laughed, while the curls bobbed on her forehead. "Tell me about it, wont you? How did you happen to go into Starbird & Saylor's?"

That was enough. She was told the story of the failure and the eight uncongenial years that had made a man of a boy at twenty-five. He held back nothing, and Estelle gathered much beside what he said. It was graphic, yet it was naïve—first the boy and then the man uppermost, young ideals and shrewdness; sweetness of nature and the fighting side that had met and conquered disaster.

As she listened Estelle grew to know him well, better, perhaps, than he would ever know. For he was Winchester way back in the beginnings, before the latter had become the man she so nearly married.

Suddenly Roger pulled himself up, and a very sweet smile broke over his face.

"It's funny but I feel as if I had always known you, Miss Allen. I think I could tell *you* anything."

Estelle held a hand out to him impulsively.

"I am sure you could," she said, and as he took and shook it, she wondered at herself, indeed.

Mrs. Pousland did not reappear. When Estelle went down to the room she found her friend stretched out on the sofa reading a novel.

"Well?" asked Mollie. "Haven't I been nice to you? I suppose you know all about him by this time."

Estelle laughed and hung up her hat. "I know a good deal," she acknowledged.

Mollie closed her book. "What do you know?"

Estelle told her the gist of the long talk between herself and Roger. "What I don't understand," she concluded, "is why this boy stirs much the same emotions in me Winchester did. Other men don't."

Mollie laughed. "You had better leave him alone, Estelle, unless you've a fancy for a young husband. And I should strongly advise against that."

Estelle looked angry. "Oh nonsense, Mollie. You reach such hasty conclusions. You must know I was only speaking analytically, from a most impersonal standpoint. Beyond that, your remark is ridiculous. I am nobody's fool."

Mollie Pousland tossed her novel into her berth.

"No, of course you aren't. You don't know what I know. That's all."

Then as she got up and proceeded to pull her steamer-trunk out into the middle of the room, she added:

"What interests me is, the fact that this young person, who buys coats for ladies, appears to have practically all the same emotions, hopes, and ambitions as any of your professional friends with temperament."

She looked at Estelle and laughed.

"It rather upsets my theory, doesn't it?"

"Oh, well, there are always exceptions to everything," Estelle returned.

"Um," said Mollie, pulling out a white lace waist, "but you do just as well by sticking to the things which aren't, I think."

"That's why I'm here with you, darling," Estelle cooed wickedly. "Now, if you are through with that steamer-trunk, I should be very much obliged if you would let me get at my own. Thank you. I won't take a minute."

The fact was, that Mollie Pousland knew just who their interesting young friend was. She was not perfectly sure how Estelle would take the information she had at her disposal if she unfolded it. It seemed a little easier not to, so she did not say anything. There came a date, however, when she almost wished she had told her.

The next morning Estelle was awakened by her traveling companion.

"Whatever is the matter, Mollie?" she asked, looking sleepily down from the upper berth.

"Scenery," Mrs. Pousland said, succinctly. "Get right up, Estelle, and dress. The stewardess has just told me, while I was out at my bath, that all the scenery comes to-day."

"I don't care if it does. What time is it? I sha'n't budge until eight o'clock."

"Oh, yes, you will, dear. This is what you paid your money for, and don't think I've forgotten your lamentations the next day because I allowed you to have your own way and take a nap down the Rhine. Get up at once. Here's the stewardess waiting to take you to your bath. It's a long way, through the saloon where all of the stewards are setting the tables. Here, put on my dressing-gown."

Estelle tumbled down into the center of the floor and allowed Mollie to bundle her up, thrust her sponges into her hands, and pass her on to the cheery little stewardess who hailed her joyously with:

"Here's my little lady. It's quite a long way, dear."

Estelle trotted after her docilely, murmuring unintelligible replies, until she saw the tub, an affair of immense white marble proportions with a flight of white



He was a very proper escort in his white flannels and panama

marble steps. Then she sat down and laughed immoderately, which woke her up.

At breakfast she turned to Roger Watson and asked him if he liked to get up early.

Every brown curl on his youthful head was in order and a fresh glow covered his skin.

"Yes," he said, vigorously. "I like it all right, especially when there is something to see. I've been on deck since six o'clock. It's a perfectly ripping morning."

Estelle rolled her pretty eyes skyward and shook her head. Words for the occasion failed her.

"Hurry up on deck now," he commanded, as he folded up his napkin. "You don't want to miss any of this and you're late."

Estelle made a grimace, but did as directed, and in a surprisingly short space of time she presented herself with an armful of wraps on the leeward side of the deck, where Roger had placed their three chairs, hers in the middle. Mollie was already tucked up watching the red banks of the shore and the single file of fishermen's cottages.

The scenery was very gradually growing bleaker, and they had sat together only a few hours before a cape came into view, and next the outline of the beautiful Perce rock.

All three rose to their feet as, through the misty light, it began to take shape, and they were the first to go forward and stand in the prow while the *Trinidad* slowly approached it and solemnly, as if performing a sacred ceremony, swung around it so that it could be seen in its solitary majesty lying offshore, its arches presenting a different aspect on every side. Mal Bay lies beyond, and St. Anne mountain, with its sacred statue on the summit, towers fifteen hundred feet high above a bleak little hamlet. A boat with difficulty rowed through the surf to the *Trinidad*, and baskets of fish were hauled on board. As it lurched away again and the big ship started off toward Gaspe, Estelle sighed.

"So beautiful, so mysterious, and so hideously dreary," she said to herself.

Roger heard it. Turning quickly he said softly, "But it would be heaven to me here with you."

Estelle shot one quick, alarmed look at the young man; then she laughed nervously and, walking over to Mollie, who was leaning on the rail, put her hand through her arm.

Ralph bit his lip and colored, feeling her rebuke.

Mollie's good-natured voice saved the situation.

"Now, Estelle, I think it was most disappointing that there were so few gulls," she said. "In the folder there were flocks of them."

"Oh, well, Mollie," Estelle replied, "life is full of such little disappointments. Don't you remember that the first time we went to Switzerland they were almost out of snow for the mountains?"

"Yes," gurgled Mollie and they all laughed.

At Gaspe, a summer resort for Canadians, they planned to get off. The *Trinidad* docked for some hours.

But Mollie slipped on the gangplank and refused to venture any farther after that. Estelle and Roger toured the town and came back with their pockets full of post-cards. In fact, he was seldom far away now.

Mollie began to profess a deep interest in two Philadelphia ladies, and as they also were going to Quebec and up the Saguenay, she pinned her hope of companionship on them firmly, never allowing them to squirm away if they had wished to. Estelle, in her white linens and with a bright red parasol, would come down in front of the Château Frontenac and climb up in a calèche, and Roger would come over from the St. Louis and clamber up after her, looking a very proper escort in his white flannels and panama. Mollie more than once watched the proceedings from the suite she and Estelle were sharing, half-pleased and half-disapproving. Roger was charming but so young. She really felt so sure of Estelle's judgment, however, that she was inclined to take the affair lightly.

So it ran its course up the Saguenay and down. Estelle looked up at Cape

Eternity, when they approached the great, wild, rocky precipice, with a proper sense of awe, but Roger looked at Estelle and took his scenery second hand. He insisted upon taking her on shore at Tadousac, and again when the *St. Irenée* stopped at Murray Bay. At the latter place they explored a pretty little cottage which was being built with an outlook over the sea. As they stood inside looking out on the evening shadows lying over trees and water, Roger said:

"How I should like a place like this!"

"I should, too," said Estelle. "It would be so nice to entertain congenial people, and sometimes just people who needed a holiday."

The young man turned to her. "Yes. Let's have it. You and I."

The wind was rising slowly through the trees. The silence about them seemed to isolate them. Everything in nature was pleading for him. But Estelle listened instead to worldly wisdom.

"Come," she said, turning away, "I want to see the hotel and the people. It's up this way, I am sure."

So he followed her, silenced again but not defeated. His was a nature to want what he wanted till he got it. He was baffled for a moment; but it was no hardship to sit beside her under the electric-sign of the Manoir Richelieu and watch the mixture of Canadians and Americans pass and repass. He was going to marry her regardless of difference of age and he knew it. It meant that he would never write those great plays or act them. But what of it? He would be happy, which was better. So he lounged comfortably beside her in the willow chair and discussed the styles worn by the dancers, and told her about his own experiences in buying for the firm.

By the time Roger left them and went to New York to do his buying for the fall trade, Estelle fully realized the seriousness of the affair for both of them. His letters followed her through the next month, as she and Mollie traveled from place to place, and he was at the station to meet them. Estelle's brother Robert was also there. From the first he looked with disfavor upon the young man, and when it came to a question of marriage

he objected vehemently. The Watsons also objected. Nothing swerved Roger, however, nor did he consider Estelle's moments of rational reasoning, as she called them, of the slightest importance. He was simply going to marry her. Mrs. Pousland would take neither side. She wanted Estelle to marry, although of course to her practical mind in this marriage there were objections. Estelle herself wanted to marry Roger; yet she was afraid, with no one to encourage her.

It was in one of her yielding moods that Roger waylaid her just as she was passing Starbird & Saylor's and he was going to his luncheon.

"Come on, Estelle," he said. "We've had enough of other people's interference. To-morrow you take a bag and meet me downtown. We'll send the bag round to my place and then we'll go and get a license, and I'll have our clergyman, who is an awfully good sort of chap, 'round at the church. That'll be the end of all this."

Estelle looked up at the kind blue eyes, and the clean, strong chin.

"Very well," she said quietly. "I think Fate intends us to marry."

On leaving the church the next day they found Roger's taxicab waiting for them. The clergyman and two young men from Starbird & Saylor's saw them into it with many good wishes. Then they whirled away to Roger's apartment. His hand sought hers and held it in an intoxicating grasp. Surely, thought Estelle, she loved him as madly as he loved her.

They took the elevator to his rooms and he unlocked the outer door. They entered his sitting-room and he held out his arms to her.

But Estelle gave a little cry. On the table directly before her stood a two-thirds length photograph of a man.

"Who is that?" she asked excitedly, leaning forward.

Roger looked at her in surprise.

"Oh, that's my cousin, Winchester Strong," he answered, "a bully good fellow. You'll like him a lot."

Estelle caught her breath as if her heart hurt her. Then she let her husband lift her lips to his. After all, what did Winchester matter to them?

The Deserter

BY JEANNETTE I. HELM

THE DOCTOR came slowly into the little office and let himself down heavily in the big leather chair. It was late, and he had just come back from his last visit for the night. At least, he hoped it was the last, for he was so tired that the very flesh on his bones, little though it was, seemed an intolerable burden of weariness. His head ached with a dull, persistent throb that seemed to come as much from his brain as his temples, and his eyes were blurred with fatigue and lost sleep. Yet as he lay there inertly, with his head thrown back deep in the cushioned top of the chair and his eyes half-closed, his mind, in spite of his tired condition, worked with an abnormal clearness and tension, and it was as if he stood outside of himself and viewed himself with another's eyes. It was no unusual thing for him to be wearied, but to-night he was tired in body and soul; not with the tire of one who has accomplished but rather with the utter exhaustion of a man who has set himself to a task that he loathes, and has been dragged along by circumstances instead of leading them.

The doctor did not open his eyes, but mentally he could see every familiar object in the shabby little room, and to-night, with his whole being, he hated each one: from the framed diploma over the mantel to the cheap bookcases filled with his dingy books, which were flanked by his little cabinet of medicines.

They were all symbols of failure, he told himself savagely, mere expedients to stop gaps in health, and not inspirations. That was what he was himself, a mere patcher and mender, tinkering more or less unskillfully with human disorders, and without the deeper knowledge of their causes that should help to eliminate them.

He had never been a brilliant student and his diploma had been won by a record of dull mediocrity that had only been kept from failure by its plodding tenacity.

It was that same dogged purpose that kept him down here in this squalid backwater of human life, where the ebb and flow of crime and accident in the streets that touched it on either side occasionally brought some flotsam of patients; and had kept him long after he had become dimly aware that even here he was not a success. He had chosen to work among the poor rather than the rich, for he had no professional ease of manner, and he felt that they, at least, would understand the interest and sympathy he had for them without needing any outward expression of it.

He was right in part, for his rough kindness had made him many friends, but he felt, nevertheless, the lack of a certain attitude toward him that he instinctively craved. They came to him when they were in trouble; his busy hours testified to that, and he could look back over many hard fights when he had stood between them and the grisly Enemy and come off victor only by sheer force of will and dogged hanging on; but it was gratitude merely they gave him in return, and not the higher admiration that would have lifted him above them. He was only one of them, a fighter in the ranks and not a leader, successful so far by sheer pluck and courage, not skill. He was being dragged down to their level, not raising them to his; becoming a mere patcher who had to work as a surgeon does on a battlefield, hurriedly, without proper tools or assistants, and must send one case away half-cured to make room for another. This was what rankled in the doctor's

mind now as he lay there, and had been slowly growing into a cankering sore of discontent for many months.

It had been brought to a head by something that very afternoon, an operation he had seen performed at a near-by hospital by a great surgeon, who was also a classmate and friend of his, and had asked him to come in and look on.

As the doctor had watched the quick, skillful hands, the cool, watchful eyes, and realized the daring knowledge of the surgeon, it seemed to him that he himself was a little better than the white-clad nurses who handed the instruments so quickly and cleverly, and infinitely beneath the two young internes, who assisted with deft eagerness and knowledge. How the world of surgery and medicine had progressed while he had been slashing and cutting his little path through the evercoming army of ills! He thought with a sense of shame of some bungling things he had dared to call "operations," and had even felt a measure of pride in; and as he left the hospital it was with a weight of discontent and unfulfillment hanging about his neck, which grew heavier with every step of his usual routine.

He had chosen the medical profession against his father's wishes, and instead of the business career the latter considered him better fitted for, he had got through his college course and examinations by the same fixed purpose, and now he was conscious, all at once, that it had been a mistake from the very beginning.

He had wanted to be a doctor because it seemed to him the finest and most wonderful of all professions, and had appealed especially to his fighting instincts; he had had ambitions of being not only a healer but a leader of men, and here he was, an ordinary soldier, and an unskillful one at that!

Across the street a raucous phonograph was brassily intoning, "I'm Afraid to Go Home in the Dark," and from the basement a concertina wheezed out a negro air. It was long past eleven, but the voices of quarreling men from the saloon on the corner split into discordant sounds whatever peace the night was bringing.

The doctor roused himself with an involuntary groan of disgust and felt on the mantel for his pipe. He had been too tired to think of it when he came in. He lit it and turned toward the hall to light the lamp which burned there all night. It was a little red ship's lantern, which a grateful sailor patient had once given him, and he always hung it so its light could be seen from the street and its rays fall through the narrow window-slit on the door-bell and speaking-tube. "Red—for danger," he had said laughingly to himself the first time.

As he hung it on the hook now, he saw two letters in the box which he had overlooked on coming in. He took them out and glanced at them indifferently. One was a bill, he knew, but the other bore a familiar postmark.

He tore it open and read it by the light of the red lantern:

DEAR NED:

Do you remember old Higgins, the multimillionaire, whose arm you set two years ago when you were up here visiting? He swore by you always, because you wouldn't charge him a fancy price for what you said you did for nothing nearly every day in the city. You made a ten-strike there, old man! He died a week ago and left all his money to found an Industrial School of which I'm one of the trustees.

And who do you suppose he asked me to select for General Medical Superintendent?

None other than yourself, lucky man! You wont have a thing to do but look at a few tongues, feel some pulses, and sit back and watch a salary of \$2,500 a year accumulate. How's that for an easy berth. Old man Higgins told me himself why he wanted you.

He said (you wont mind my repeating his exact words, I know):

"He isn't so damned much of a doctor, but he's an honest man and that's what I want!"

Seriously, Ned, this is just the chance for you, and you are in luck to get it, for I know that doctoring isn't a paying job for such a confirmed old truth-teller as you are, and you are wasting your time down there in that dirty slum doing charity work, when you could be gathering moss elsewhere. You deserve it, too, after all the grind you have had, and I'm as jolly as a sand-boy at the thought of it.

Of course you wont hesitate, but he wished me to ask you first before mak-

ing it known. Drop me a line at once to say when you will come up and begin. The building is all completed, after a year's steady work, and the dedication is next week, when we open business, so you had better pull out at once and come up to my house until then. Can't say how pleased I am over the whole thing.

It was signed by an old school friend of his, a solid business man with a great heart under a common-place exterior.

The doctor turned it over mechanically and then slowly reread it. His mind seemed stupefied and unable to take in any meaning of the words. Then suddenly his eye caught the figures, \$2,500. *That* was clear enough, at least. It meant that he had only to write a few words and the unequal struggle would be over, and he would be free of all this. \$2,500 a year! It was more than he had made or could expect to make anywhere.

He walked back slowly into the little office and stood looking around, as if it were something just seen for the first time. How mean and sordid it appeared in the light of those magic figures, "\$2,500!" With that sum at his command no one could taunt him with failure. Nevertheless, the old man's words came back to him, bringing a subconscious sense of irritation. Well, even if he wasn't so "damned much of a doctor," he would show them that he knew a thing or two!

A faint, little mocking voice seemed to repeat in his ear: "Nothing to do but look at a few tongues and feel some pulses."

Was that worth \$2,500 a year? Even his friend admitted it was not. He set his teeth grimly. It was better, at all events, than his hopeless work here for people who would be as content with any other doctor, and who would not miss him when he had gone.

Still there were one or two cases he did not want to drop just yet; a couple of sick babies on the street below—and there was Lopez' wife. He had not liked the looks of her case when he left there this evening. Pshaw, the hospital could take care of the rest just as he would ask his friend the surgeon to take a look at

her. He would do it, the doctor would know, for he was a charitable man, and the case was rather similar to the one he had operated on so skillfully that very afternoon. Now if the doctor himself were doing it, it would be with a very different result, no doubt.

He smiled cynically to himself and wrote the name of his friend on the paper before him:

DEAR JIM:

Of course I sha'n't hesitate. The chance is too good and I'm sick of it here. There's nothing but makeshifts of mending to be done for those poor creatures, and I can't reach them mentally, somehow. Maybe I'll prove a greater success examining tongues and the like. A good doctor here needs to be made of one-half absolute skill, one-quarter understanding and the rest, pure nerve. I can only hang on and not know why I do it. I guess old man Higgins was right, after all, in his summing up of me—"

He stopped. That was not what he had meant to say, but somehow the truth had slipped out. Should he rewrite it? It was nearly one o'clock now, and he was desperately tired. No, he would let it go. He added a few words as to the time when he would be able to come, and signed his name. Then he slipped it in an addressed envelope and went into the hall to leave it in his box for the postman.

The red light caught his eye and he stopped. What was the use of leaving that burning, now that he intended to go? He needed sleep badly, and if anyone came they must go away again. He would put it out, muffle his bell, and sleep soundly for one night. Yet as he thought of Mrs. Lopez, he hesitated, with his hand on the lamp. The habit of professional responsibility was strong in him, but the new revolt had seized him no less tensely. At this moment, all the people in whose interests he had labored and striven seemed somehow to be arrayed against him, and he felt almost a sense of anger at their intruding on him. If they really didn't need him, why should he bother about them? He would leave a message with the address of the surgeon on his slate outside, and if anyone came they could go there.

He muffled the bell, but he paused with the red lantern in his hand. As he raised it, at length, to his lips to blow it out, a loud knock sounded on the door close beside him. The doctor started so violently that he almost dropped the lantern. His nerves were certainly in a wretched state, it was time he quit!

He pulled open the door angrily and the red light from the lantern in his hand streamed out on a very small boy standing on the doorstep, and was reflected back again in the brass buttons of a big policeman close behind him. It was he who came to the rescue, as the boy fell back, half frightened by the scowl on the doctor's face, which the red light twisted into a diabolic caricature of his usual cheerful smile.

"Here's the doctor himself, lad," he said. "Just tell him what you're afther wantin' this time o' night."

"Oh, is that you, Cronin?" said the doctor, as he recognized the policeman. "What's the trouble?"

"That's what I can't find out, sorr," answered the officer with a salute. "I was comin' along me beat just now and I ran across this boy sittin' cryin' on the curb. I asked him what was the throuble and then he jabbered a lot of lingo at me. I've picked up a quare deal of words, bein' here so long where there's a sample of every kind of furriner, but I couldn't make out any more than '*médico*,' which I guessed meant doctor, so I just brought him along here to you, as the one for the ticket. Is this the '*médico*' you meant, sonny?"

"*Si, si, señor. É bons médico!*" burst out of the boy eagerly. "*Minha mae está doente—gravemente doente!*"

"Why, it's Miguel," said the doctor. "Yes, I know him, Cronin. It's his mother who is sick, the wife of Pedro Lopez, the Portuguese who keeps the little fish-market around the next corner. They sent the boy for me and he lost his way."

"Well, I guessed you was the one he was afther," said Cronin, "and his mother is sick? Poor little kid!"

He lingered for a moment as the doctor bent down and spoke a few quick words to the boy in the latter's tongue.

The answer was a torrent of excited speech, and it was not until the doctor disappeared inside, followed timidly by Miguel, that the officer turned and walked off with a satisfied nod.

The doctor had gathered up the necessary instruments and medicines, flung them into a bag, got into his heavy coat, and was outside again, walking quickly down the street with the boy trotting at his side, before it came over him, with a sudden surprise, that he was doing exactly what he had intended not to do. The call to battle had taken him unawares, and, like an old war-horse, he had responded before he knew it. Well, he would call up the surgeon if it seemed best, but he would have another look at the case before he did that. Anyway, it was the last time and besides these people depended on him. Lopez had been among his first patients, and his wife, a quiet, overworked little creature, always had a smile for him.

The doctor quickened his steps until Miguel had to break into a run to keep up with him. A few minutes brought him to the tumble-down little house that half-propped, and was itself half-supported by the littler shed beside it which served as the fishmarket. Stairs and hall were scrupulously neat, however, and so was the low-ceilinged room the doctor entered, followed by Lopez himself, white-faced, but overflowing with guttural relief. A black robed Sister of Charity rose as the doctor came in. Sister Seraphine and he were old friends and comrades in arms in many a stout battle.

The doctor crossed to the bed and made a swift examination of the almost unconscious woman. As he asked several short questions of the Sister and listened to her quick, intelligent replies, his mind worked with an intensity and clearness that surprised himself. There was only one thing to be done. He saw it clearly with a perception that was unclouded by any of the doubt that had too often oppressed and darkened his soul at such crises. An operation *must* be performed, and immediately, if the woman were to be saved; the same operation he had watched the great surgeon perform that very day.

Could he persuade him? He himself would not dare do it—but would the other be able to get here in time? He drew Lopez aside and spoke with quick decision.

"There's only one chance to save her, Pedro, and that's a chance—but we'll take it. There's got to be an operation here, right away, and I know the man to do it. I'll step down to the drug store and 'phone him at once to come over."

He was buttoning his coat as he spoke, but before he could turn to the door the Portuguese had caught him by the arm.

"*O Diós! Señor médico, señor médico,*" he cried imploringly. "Don't-a leave-a my wife; don't-a bring any stranga dottor to cutt-a her and keel-a her. She die if any but you-a touch her. She beg-a me that before she go to sleep-a. Dottor, dottor, you-a stay, you-a do it."

The doctor paused for a moment, irresolute, before the sight of the man's working face and pleading eyes. Every moment that he hesitated he knew, lessened the margin of hope. Suppose there wasn't time even now? At the thought, a cold sweat broke out over him. Could he perform the operation himself, dared he attempt it? Dared he not attempt it?

"Pedro," he cried, "I—I can't do it!"

A hand was laid on his arm and he swung around to look into the calm eyes and strong face of the Sister.

"Yes, you can, doctor," she said quietly, "and I will help you."

The silence in the room was broken only by Miguel's sobbing, while the doctor stared into the steady gray eyes before him. Then, with a quick, long breath he turned away, flung off his coat, and rolled up his shirt-sleeves with a sort of savage frenzy.

Nearly everything was lacking in the poor little room: operating table, proper anæsthetizing apparatus, disinfectants—but he would try, he and Sister Seraphine together!

He gave his directions with a sort of detached calmness and the Sister executed them with cool, unfaltering rapidity. His constant practice among such difficulties as would have hampered a

surgeon not accustomed to them stood him in good stead now, and added to this was an inspiration that seemed born of his desperate need.

The doctor could never tell afterward just how it happened; he seemed to be two people, the one an impartial observer who stood aside and watched another operate, with an almost superhuman skill; avoiding death here by an eyelash's thickness, and failure there by a dexterity that seemed to come, somehow, as a matter of habit. The Sister, too, seemed inspired with the same skill and an intuition that sensed his every want before his lips could frame it. And all the time Death hovered at his elbow, beating impatiently on the frail wall of skill and science that the brave fighters strove to raise, and it was not until nearly two hours later that doctor and nurse gazed at each other triumphantly across a field of victory won by the narrowest margin.

The doctor, going down the stairs slowly and stumblingly like an uncertain old man, almost ran into a big blue figure standing on the doorstep. It was Cronin, and he raised his hand in stiff salute.

"And how is it afther comin' out, Doctor?" he asked. "I was passin' by and I thought I'd be stheppin' in and see how the kid's mother was."

"Oh—we won."

His voice seemed to himself to be coming through a thick substance that made it sound strange and faraway, but his eyes shone strangely bright and clear.

The old policeman regarded him a moment curiously.

"It's glad I am to hear it. I'm walkin' your way, sorr," he said, falling into step with the younger man. "Perhaps you'd like to bear me company? It's none too nice a neighborhood around here at this time o' the mornin'."

The doctor nodded silently and they moved on down the dark, deserted street.

"No, there aint much of the select and pretty about it here," went on Cronin garrulously. "And it's much the same day and night; a lot of badness and dirty doin's that you've got to make a fight against and never let up on. As

fast as wan lot gets cl'aned out there's a new lot springs up just like weeds. But after all, who's to blame 'em for being weeds? This aint no garden. Times is, whin I get so tired of lookin' out fur folks doing somethin' bad that I'd be afther givin' the whole thing up for two cints and going somewhere where dacency aint the onexpected what niver happens."

"Are you going to quit?" asked the doctor, startled out of his state of abstraction, for Cronin had been a feature of the neighborhood for over fifteen years.

"Well, I thought of it," said Cronin. "You see, I've been here a long time and a man gets tired of fightin', where it don't seem to be doin' much good, and jailin' poor creatures that don't know enough not to do it ag'in; but I don't think I'll quit just yit."

"I'm glad to hear it," said the doctor warmly. "You've been a good friend to them, Cronin. They'd miss you here."

"Well, I don't know about that," reflected Cronin. "And it wasn't that that made me kape on altogether, though I'd like to do what I c'u'd. The most of it was you."

The doctor turned and stared at him.

"Me?" he exclaimed.

"Yis. Whin I sees you goin' around here every day and night, too, fightin' sickness and all kinds of dirty diseases like you done to-night—and bein' God Almighty 'most to some of these poor folks, it makes me kind of ashamed to think of givin' up. Just to-night, whin I was passin' by, I was t'inkin' what a fool I was fur to be afther turnin' out of a warrm bed and paddlin' around wet, dirty shreets just fur to see that some folks don't knock t'other folks on their heads, or burn up their houses, or somethin' ilse; and thin I seen your little red light a-burnin' away there, and I says to myself: 'See here, the doctor's on the bate just the same as you and he's not desertin' yit. Whin he does, it's time fur you to turn your back t' the front, too. So—I'm no deserter, nayther.'"

It was an unusual burst of confidence and at its end he stopped and cleared his throat. They had reached the doctor's house by this time and the doctor stood with one foot on the step studying the big policeman with eyes that held a peculiar expression.

"So you think I am not a deserter?" he said slowly. "I was precious near it to-night, Cronin."

The old ex-soldier nodded his head wisely.

"Near it aint bein' it," he said. "It's like bein' under fire fur the furst time. You never know how fast you kin go forrard till you've got to thinkin' about how fast you'd like to run back. I've been in the army and I mind well how it is. We're both put here fur to fight, so I guess we'll stay in the front awhile. Good-night to you, Doctor."

He drew himself up with something of his old military precision and saluted, then turned and walked on down the now quiet street, swinging his stick and with a watchful eye on areas and front doors.

The doctor stood looking after him a minute, and then opened his door and went inside. Dropping into a chair he stared about him. His body was so overtired that it felt like a cork, and his eyes were so weary that he could not close them, yet his whole being was filled with an ecstasy of absolute triumph. Whatever had happened, whatever might happen, he knew that he had fought his fight under the most adverse conditions, amid surroundings that might have foiled the great surgeon himself. And he had won! The same inspired skill might never be his again, but the confidence, born of that victory, would never leave him, now.

He stumbled over to the box where his letter still lay and slitting the envelope read it through. It seemed to him that some one else must have written it, the some one who was going to take \$2,500 a year for feeling pulses and looking at tongues. With a smile he passed his hand caressingly over the red lantern, then with an impulsive movement tore the written sheet twice across.



Fido and the Castaways

BY BROUGHTON BRANDENBURG

ILLUSTRATED BY HORACE TAYLOR

THE group around the large circular, Chianti-stained table in the corner at Rollino's were singing "La Bella Maria" after the manner of a vocal *reconnaissance* in force. Behind us a big western lawyer, who strove harder to be a Bohemian than he did to untangle the New York statutes, sat with his right hand gripped tensely around a wine bottle, repeating resonantly into the bewildered face of the velvet-hatted model before him:

"There's a grave by the Pabeng River,
A grave which the Burmans shun."

and on about "Subadar Prag Tewarri" and the "Snider that squibbed in the Jungle," till he came to:

"The drip—drip—drip from the baskets,
That reddened the grass by the way."

And then the old press-agent sitting beside me shivered so violently that he upset the jar of tall, brittle *gracci* before him.

He fixed me with a saddened eye.

"It's been ten years since you and I unconsciously conspired to keep 'The

Maids of Malden' from paying owners and, *ad interim*, there is a little story which, whenever I tell it, no one seems to take as I do."

He paused.

"I'm so glad to see you again, Tom, that I will submit—"

"You never knew Nina Vardon married that shoe-man in Boston and quit the business, did you? I thought not. This thing happened on their wedding-trip. One day, in Chicago, where we were playing to S. R. O. with Nina in fleshings in a silver moon in the prince's dream, she ran up to me in the front of the house. She had a way of putting her hand in your side-pocket when she wanted you to stand hitched, while she paraded any thoughts she might have. She spiked me.

"'Tommy, you old darling,' says she, 'I've got to have a father quick. You've got to be it.'

"'Rather late in the family history, aint it?' says I.

"'More's the pity,' says she. 'Listen like a jury, Tommy. This certain per-

son, Endicott Stotesbury Williams, that camped in the stage-box in Boston our week, is on here with a butterfly-net and a wedding-ring and I'm likely to be took by surprise. How'd *you* feel to be lined up before a man and wife factory with nobody to give you away?

"If I was *some* people I know, I'd refuse to believe my luck," says I.

"Tommy, you're a horrible old darling. I'm not that bad—"

"Oh, I know," says I, 'there's lots worse.'

"You can bet that seven ways and win," says she with the hot-needle eye. 'But I've got no family. I have told him my father is a retired broker, who has just returned from London. He's out buying me a diamond ta-ra-ra and a diamond collar for Fido, and hunting up some of the boys, and he wants me to marry him as soon as I can get papa on from New York. Then we are going aboard a yacht he has bought, cruise down some of this fool fresh water, where all this wind comes from, around Niagara Falls and down the St. Lawrence, then around to Boston. I like him, Tommy dear, he's got loads of it, and if you'll play Respectable Father for me till he deeds me a house, you can die and leave me an orphan. Tommy, do you hear money talking in a whisper? Don't you hear this wad here in my bag saying: 'Be a father to poor little orphan Nina and poor little grandson Fido, at a hundred bills per Saturday night?'

"Little girl, how much you look like your poor dead mother. Who was she?" says I.

"Well, that yacht had anchored in Buffalo Creek among the grain elevators before I could hear proper after the yell that the management let out when Nina and I quit company.

"I had played old man from *King Lear* to *Uncle Tom*, and Nina told me I was the best father she had ever had. But as grandpa to Fido, I was a fiasco. I suppose he was all right as dogs go, but I don't go that way. He was a kind of unraveled black spaniel, and every time we went ashore, Papa Stotesbury or Grandpapa Thomas, being me, had to pick out the burrs. Still, I ought not to bear him

any hard feelings. He was a nice little dog in a show, or on the front page of an A B C book, or to belong to the house across the street, but Daughter Dear put him to sleep with Grandpapa because otherwise he roamed the deck and barked down the forward companion way at Chew Wop, the Chinese cook-steward-engineer, all night. Something told the little beast what Chew Wop always thought, when he looked at the fat little body scurrying around the deck, like a Scotchman hunting a bargain in Ireland. But, I am leaving out the rest of the party aboard the *Marvella*, that was her name.

"Besides the Vardon family and its connection by marriage, there was Jimmy Hammil, who had been the bridegroom's classmate and had been best man at the wedding, and young Ralph Wallace. Jimmy had never recovered from his college education, and had floated feebly from college club to college club for twenty-five years, growing gray in changing clothes and accepting invitations such as this. Wallace had graduated the year before, and, after waiting vainly for the world to appreciate him, had begun to look around for some one to tell him how to make a living, despite his educational handicaps. He had found the *Marvella* for Stotesbury darling, and had been dragged along to run it, a sort of gentleman jockey to the good craft. I often wonder how we ever got to the end of Lake Ontario. Maybe it was because there was plenty of room on the lakes, and somebody to tow us through the narrow places.

"I was about out of paternal advice, and beginning to long for Forty-second Street and Broadway one evening, when Wallie made an effort to anchor in the shelter of an island, in among the Thousand Ones, and picked out a spot where the current was running like a night-freight. Bing! we went right up on shore against the rocks, and the *Marvella* went pounding and jouncing around on them like an Irishman jigging with a jag. Nina wouldn't stay aboard a minute, and she screeched like an Iroquois. So with Stotesbury bearing grand-baby Fido, we all fled to the shore.

"Well, I got out the camp stuff and got it on the rocks, told Chew Wop to get some provender, and calmed Jimmy with some verbal kicks, and we got off on the rocks. Wallie was wrestling with the boat and, about the time Jimmy and I were coming back from the island to get something besides the tents, the boat kicked up her keel and started down stream. Chew Wop had come rushing on deck, one box of biscuits in his hand and a salt shaker, and made a record leap for the rocks. He made it, dry as a bone. It took about two seconds and a half to see the yacht was sinking, and Wallie plunged in and swam ashore just as she settled out of sight. All around were islands with houses on them, but it was late October. The cottagers were gone and we were as completely marooned as if we were in the South Pacific.

"We yelled in turn for help that would not come, watched for lights that we knew would not shine, and then built a fire and settled down. All were in dinner-clothes, for Papa Stotesbury was very formal. Wallie was a little wet. Chew Wop, after depositing his salt

shaker and biscuits in Nina's lap, entered into a state of coma.

"We got the tents and unfolded the cots, and then faced the situation: Pitched out of civilization, up against first principles, in evening-clothes, with a salt shaker and a box of biscuits!

"In the morning I was out first, save Chew Wop. He had found a frying pan in the camp stuff, had built up a fine fire, and set the pan beside it.

"What me cook blackfess?" says he, with a lovely smile.

"Go down to the grocery and get some ham and eggs and a loaf of bread," says I, "and tell the butcher to call around at nine for the order."

"Then I turned my back on him, and when I looked around, he was gone.

"Wallie and Jimmy came out and we sat around the fire. Just then Chew Wop emerged from the brush, wet with dew, and a strange, dazed look in his eyes.

"Glosly man, bluchah man aint not," says he, trying to pull a smile.

"It's this way, Chew Wop," says Wallie. "There is nothing for breakfast, nothing for lunch, nothing for dinner, and



With Stotesbury bearing Fido
we fled to shore

the same to-morrow and forevermore, amen.'

"'All light,' says Chew Wop, happy once more, as he picked up the pan, washed it in the river, and hung it on a tree.

"Just then the bride and groom appeared. Nina was munching crackers; there were about four left in the box.

"'Hello, boys!' says she. 'Have a biscuit, papa dear.'

"Papa dear takes one, and as sad as at a child's funeral, breaks it into two pieces, gives one-half to Chew Wop, and eats what is left, Nina's eyes got as big as the front end of an opera glass. Her jaw dropped and her mouth came down at the corners.

"'My gosh, Tommy, I never was hep for a minute. I've et 'em all. Honest, I didn't think.' Her relapse was total.

"The three Harvard men looked at the fire, and I, well I tried to dope out just how long a man might expect to live on half a milk cracker. Then I gently put paws on the cracker-box, took out a cracker, passed half of it to Jimmy and half to Wallie, and after holding the re-

maining three up to view, I put them away in the tent, remarking:

"'Another half each to-morrow morning. Take as little exercise as possible, my doomed friends, and save your strength.'

"'But is Grandpapa Tommy not going to give little baby Fido no bwefuss?'

"Jimmy and Wallie made a break for the woods.

"'I—I—will tell Chew Wop to get him something, darling,' says Statesbury pet, and she was satisfied.

"When I found Jimmy and Wallie, Jimmy was crying and Wallie was swearing in his soft, Harvard way. I put the whole thing to them good and straight, and we commenced to rake that little island for anything that looked like it might digest. The berries were all gone; the frost had killed off the green plants; there were no nut trees on the island, and therefore no squirrels, and about noon we gathered around the fire and counted up. Jimmy had a handful of dried seeds; Wallie had caught a craw fish and got wet again; I had some dried haws. Then we had lunch. The afternoon

we spent trying to make some fishing-lines out of ravelings and strings, and with bent pins for hooks. We must have had a mighty poor opinion of the fish to think we had a chance. We knew better by dark.

"About sunrise I woke up, and the first thing I heard was Fido barking. I propped my head out of the fly, and me, oh my, what did I see! Fido had risen early and was out in front. Chew Wop had built a big fire and had the frying pan sitting beside it. Fido was prancing around barking his fool head off. Chew Wop was down on his hands and knees; one hand he held out to Fido, coaxingly; the other bore a sharp pointed stone!

"'Nicee dloggie, nicee lil dloggie, come a close dloggie.'

"'Don't you dare, you yellow cannibal,' says I. 'Throw that stone away.'



"'What me cook bleckfess?'"



Nina was munching crackers

"The Chink tried to make out he was meaning to play with the pup, but gave it up all of a sudden, put both hands on his stomach and says, in a way to tear your heart:

"'Mliser Tom, me so glosch blame hunglee.'

"All that day Fido was chasing over the island trying to dig up something to eat for himself, and I caught myself watching him wherever he went, and beginning to worry about his making himself thin. He was so plump and fat, and I, too, was so 'glosch blame honglee.'

"We built fires to send up signal-smoke columns like the Indians; we set notes afloat on rafts and saw them go down stream; we did everything we could think of, even to more fishing, but just before dark we ate the last seeds and slippery elm bark we could find, and then turned in.

"Somewhere in the night an owl hooted in the trees, and Wallie and I got out and tried to knock him out with stones, at which the owl flew heavily away toward the next island, and we had

set Fido barking so that Nina put him out of the tent. It was very chilly, so we took him in with us.

"'Tom,' says Wallie, as Fido jumped up to crawl in with him, 'I want you to take this dog away from me.'

"'I don't want him, Wallie.'

"'He's your grand-baby.'

"'Why remind him of his misfortune?'

"'Well, I wont have him near me.'

"'Why not? He's a nice, clean dog, just as loving and snuggly as a baby. Why not, Wallie?'

"'Tom! Don't you realize what he is?'

"'Then I sat up.

"'Yes I do, Wallie. That's why I don't want him.'

"'Put him in with Chew Wop.'

"'Never, Wallie.'

"'Why not?'

"'Because — there — would — be — nothing—left in—the morning.'

"After a few seconds Wallie says:

"'Oh!"

"Then he thought a little while and then remarks:

"'Guess I'll keep him in here with me, Tom. He might be hard to catch if he got loose.'

"In the morning early we were awake long before it was time to get up, and I looked over and saw Fido snuggled up at Wallie's neck, playfully nibbling at Wallie's ear, and Wallie watching him out of the corner of his eye in a way that made me feel funny all over.

"'Fido, Fido! Mamma want you, darlin', calls Nina outside, and Wallie grabs Fido as he starts to jump down. Fido wriggles, whines, and tries to bite. He thought maybe it meant breakfast. Jimmy was watching the performance, a look of horror on his face, as plain as a sign of fresh paint.

"'Let him go, quick,' says I to Wallie, and Fido scooted out.

"'Here's my dumplin, bess his little heart; kiss him good morning, papa.'

"Wallie turned over and groaned. Jimmy got up and sat on the edge of his cot, his gray hair on end, one side of his moustache brushed up, the other down, and the look of a seven-time pall-bearer in his eyes.

"'Gentlemen, I understand I may be starving, but I shall neither participate in nor interfere with your reversion to bar-

barism. I will have none of this—this—this—food.'

"'Not even a tender little, well browned, well salted second joint?' says I.

"Jimmy dived under the covers and drew them over his head.

"In ten minutes we were outside. Stotesbury darling and Nina precious were sitting on opposite sides of the fire. Chew Wop was washing the frying pan, murmuring strange heathen prayers. When he saw me, he remarked again how 'glosh blamed honglee' he was, and he ran his little narrow eyes over my erstwhile plump person. Gold-filled billy goats! the heathen Chinees was figuring me into steak, rib roast and cutlet! I packed off, got a stone and threw it at him. It splashed in the water beyond.

"'Oh, Stotesbury,' says Jimmy, coming out just then. 'Your poor father-in-law is in his first delirium. Where is dear little Fido?'

"Nina should have been suspicious of the way we rushed to hunt him. We found him back of the tent worrying the fresh skin of a chipmunk. Doubtless the only one on the island. *Fido had breakfasted.* His fat little stomach was full and the tears of envy came into my eyes.

"As Jimmy carried him back to Nina, he looked at me and said, softly:

"'He is plump, isn't he?'



It was very cold so we took him in



That little imp was
like a flea

"When the pup was asleep in Nina's lap, I beckoned Wallie aside.

"Wallie, we have got to get Stotesbury to look at this thing in the right light," I said.

"Yes,—before it is too late," he agreed.

"I beckoned to the bridegroom and we strolled off behind the tent, where we caught poor Jimmy chewing on some old sumach burrs.

"What's up, boys?" says the bridegroom, brushing the morning dew off his evening-dress.

"A proposition to arrange something to go down."

"Naturally—naturally."

"Yes, very naturally, even primitively. Let us look at this matter logically. Here we are starving—a woman, four white men, a Mongolian and—a dog."

"Fido's papa by marriage stared hard, then staggered a little, and began to smile joyously.

"Well, you have my consent, gentlemen," said he. "I might have known he would be good for something, sometime. Just go and tell her what's what."

"All right, Jimmy, you are the most tactful—"

"Gentlemen, you do me great honor. Something tells me I might, in the madness of nature's cravings, even sink so low as to—as to—as I might say subsist on—on a little creature whose playful, affectionate capers have beguiled our affections."

"And Jimmy began to cry right there. I saw I must be wrong.

"No, Stotesbury, you must do it. You are her husband."

"I—I—go ask for Fido—"

"Sure, you're her husband."

"Well, you've been her father a dashed sight longer."

"S-sh-sh—not so loud," says Jimmy, "why don't you toss a coin?"

"Or draw lots among four of us," says I.

"We did it. I broke four sticks, the drawer of the short one to get Fido."

"Jimmy drew the short stick."

"We hid behind the trees while he backed, filled, and drew on just like a stage widower about to propose. At last he stood quivering in front of Nina."

"Mrs.—Mrs. Williams, may I request Fido of you—"

"Sure, take him, Billy, and don't Missis me any more. Take him, I'm going to lie down; do anything you want to with him, but be sure to bring him back. Good-by, darling, kiss mamma."

"The little devil knew what was up. No sooner did Nina have her back turned, than he began to claw and bite, till Jimmy had to drop him, and he made one break for the brush.

"Head him off, Wallie! Get after him, Stotesbury!" I yelled.

"We were off in pursuit. He must not get back to Nina's tent. Chew Wop heard and saw, built up the fire, and got down the frying pan.

"Do you know that little imp was like a flea. He felt the survival of the fittest strong within him. He ducked, he dodged, he scooted, and evening-dress was scattered the length and breadth of the island, but, weak as we were, we kept him away from camp. At last he shot into a low pine thicket. We surrounded it and crawled in on our hands and knees until the four of us came face to face in the middle. No Fido!

"Sadly we turned toward camp.

"He knows better than to come back until—"

"Until—Chew Wop—"

"Yes, until there are bones to pick," says I.

"Oh, mercy," says Jimmy.

"Boys!" gasped Wallie. "Smell!"

"Down the breeze, in the tang of the pinewood smoke from the fire, was borne an exquisite odor, and some one of us was the first to start to run.

"Chew Wop was dancing a solemn Confucian measure as he tended the frying pan, and singing a chilling minor song as he smiled.

"Stotesbury, sweetheart! Father, dear—why—look at you—what on earth were you chasing out there?" says the bereaved but unknowing mother.

"Jimmy headed back to the woods. The bridegroom was looking around for a hole in the ground.

"Oh, we—we caught a big rabbit for Chew Wop a while ago, Nina," says I.

"Yes, if it hadn't been for Fido, we wouldn't have found him," volunteered Wallie.

"Oh, where is mama's peshous little hunter dawgie?"

"I couldn't speak and I heard son-in-law's teeth chattering.

"Hlim chasin' more labbits—mebbe," says Chew Wop, grinning and poking the fire.

"Here, grandpapa Tommie," exclaimed Nina, 'don't you dare throw that bone away. Don't you see I've saved all the others for my precious child. Why don't you lazy fellows go get him now that your own stomachs are full?"

"I didn't look at anything but the ground, as I passed over the bone and got up. Jimmy went one way, Wallie another, and the bridegroom couldn't get away quick enough.

"In about ten minutes I heard Nina giving her little whistle for Stotesbury, and I looked out to see him hiding behind a tree and motioning to me to go in and break the news. I motioned back to him to do it.

"Stotesbury—ee, Nina'll be mad if you don't come here this very minute."

"Then Papa Stotesbury began to whistle for Fido. It is the first and last time I ever heard a man whistle a lie.

"From somewhere behind the pine trees came the cling—cling—cling of a motor boat. I heard Wallie's wild halloo and he came running through the brush yelling:

"There's a duck-hunter's boat coming straight for the island!"

"Sure enough. There it was a good, big river launch and two men in hunting coats.

"On the bow was a dripping wet little black water spaniel, barking furiously. Around his neck was a diamond studded collar we knew well.

"Is this your dog?" cried one of the men. "We picked him up swimming away from this island."

"I turned on Chew Wop in a blinded, smothering sort of way. He had a dark, raw skin he was about to spread on a sheet of bark.

"You—you—say—what is that?"

"Him fine mink sklin; me gettee club and killee toudlay."

"And he pointed to the heaps of rocks at the water's edge."

William J. Kelly
as *Arnaud*
Photograph by
Byron,
New York

Miss Julia Dean
as *Christiane*
in "The
Lily"



IT needed just such decisive successes as "The Lily" and "The City" to put a new edge on the dramatic season in New York, which lately has been dulled by a monotonous succession of amiably mediocre plays scarcely less vexatious to the theatregoer than outright failures. The devotee of the stage, especially if he be of critical bent, prefers quick action either for good or for ill. Lingering death, it should be remembered, is no less trying to the patient than to the watchers.

There will be no obsequies for either "The Lily" or "The City." Each play pulsates with life. Each sends a big, human throb to those who sit before it. Each is a triumph of that form of drama-

turgy which, by laying bare vital passions, plays upon the emotions of its audience. Each addresses the senses rather than the mind.

With "The Lily" I propose to deal first. Although French in theme, the work of two talented Parisians, M. Pierre Wolff and M. Gaston Leroux, it is, in its American adaptation, a new illustration of the magic of Mr. David Belasco. What that wizard-like stage manager once did for "Zaza" he has again accomplished in the new play. Human as "The Lily" was when it came to his hand, he has made it still more human. The success of the Stuyvesant Theater will continue, for Mr. Belasco has again

divined the public taste and met it with a drama of universal appeal.

"The Lily" has still further artistic significance. The permanent company which Mr. Belasco has introduced by its performance was organized to challenge, on its own ground, the stock company at the New Theatre, which has announced its intention of establishing a new standard of acting for the native stage. With Miss Nance O'Neil and Mr. Charles Cartwright at their head, the Stuyvesant players need not fear the half-alien company at the endowed theatre. One performance was sufficient to disclose that they are the most evenly balanced company in New York.

The debut of Miss O'Neil on a Belasco stage calls for a word of comment. A dozen or more years ago, as the leading actress of a small local stock company, she displayed unmistakable evidences of potential histrionic genius. Then she became mistress of her own artistic destiny and set out on a tour of the world. Alas, the transformation when she returned! Artifice had usurped the place of art. Extravagances of every sort had undermined her power. The once potentially brilliant actress had become the queen of the barn-storming sisterhood. As far as New York was concerned, she suffered total eclipse.

It was when Miss O'Neil had declined to this lowly estate that Mr. Belasco undertook her artistic redemption. What must have been her heartburnings during the long weeks of rehearsals, she alone knows. But on the night of the production of "The Lily" a new Nance O'Neil emerged. Twenty-seven times, in response to continuous cheering, the curtain was lifted after that electrical outburst of passion with which she capped the climax of the play. As *Odette*, the unlovely spinster, who until then had been held in the background of the story, she poured out the last dregs of bitterness of a bruised and torn soul. And that one speech—uttered without so much as a trace of conventional theatricalism—was the unquestioned triumph of Miss O'Neil's career.

Let prudish minds not jump at a conclusion that "The Lily"—despite the lit-

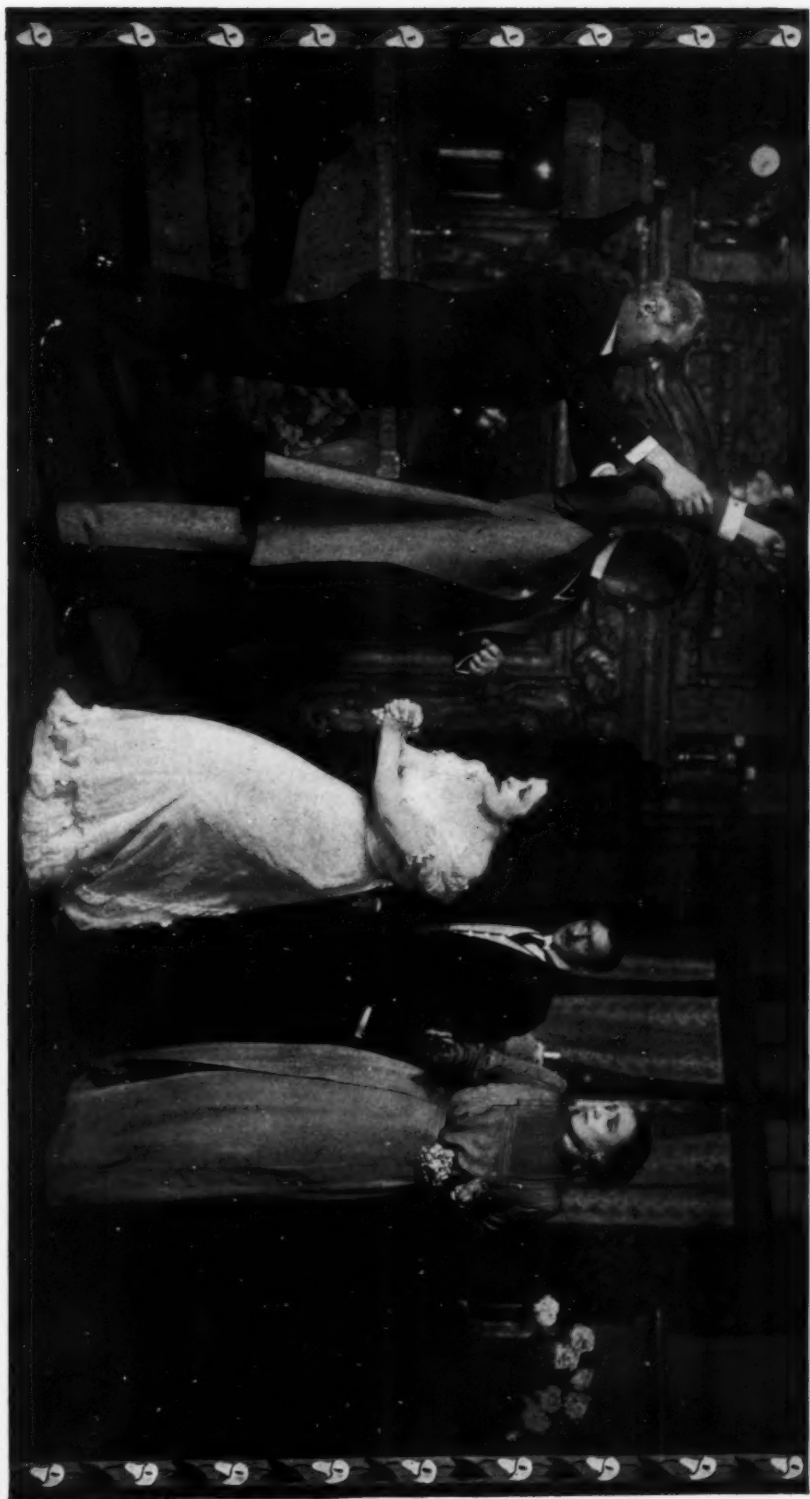
eral meaning of *Odette's* ringing speech—is a defense of free love. Rather it is a protest against the social ideals of the old regime in France, which walls the unmarried girl away from the outside world and subordinates her choice of a husband to her parents' wishes or whims. This is the real thesis of the play. It bears only slight application to the life around us, but it forces its significance upon us by its sheer human appeal.

In the château of the impoverished, dissolute, and autocratic *Comte de Maigny* live his two daughters, *Odette* and *Christiane*. At thirty-five *Odette* is a wan, forlorn, world-weary spinster. Once she loved, but not according to her father's choice, and in compliance with his wishes, she put away her dream of happiness. Hiding her sorrow, she grew old before her time, and when the play opens she is the passive mistress of her father's gloomy home.

Christiane is ten years younger than *Odette*, and in the flush of romantic girlhood. During her rambles she has met an artist, *Georges Arnaud*, who has set up a studio in a ruined abbey near by. *Arnaud* is the victim of an unhappy marriage and has been long separated from a wife who will not divorce him, but *Christiane* finds in him her ideal. The infatuation grows, and at last *Christiane* makes the fatal misstep.

The brother of the girls, the *Viscomte Maximilien*, is about to regild the tarnished family escutcheon by a match with the daughter of a rich bourgeois cotton manufacturer. The wedding-day has been set. At the prospect the impecunious old Count has momentarily forgotten his flirtations and his Paris clubs. But a sudden hitch in the program occurs. Rumors of *Christiane's* scandal reach the ears of *Plock*, the rich bourgeois, and he peremptorily calls off the match.

The play which, up to this point, has been mainly explanatory, now begins to emit dramatic sparks. The Count at first refuses to suspect *Christiane*. His family pride only is assailed. But *Maximilien*, an unconscionable cad, credits the scandalous story and persuades his father to lend his ear. *Christiane* is summoned and



Photograph by Byron, New York
 Bruce McKae as *Huazir*, Chas. Cartwright as *de Matigny*, Miss Julia Dean as *Christiane*, Alfred Hickman as *Maximilien*, and Miss Nance O'Neil as *Odette*
 in the crucial scene of "The Lily," where *de Matigny* denounces *Christiane*



Photograph by White, New York

—Miss Nance O'Neil, who has achieved her greatest success as *Odette*, in "The Lily" . . .

cross-questioned. She denies everything, of course, but her manner belies her words.

Now approaches the crucial scene. By a clever ruse *Arnaud* is lured to the château. The pair are charged with their clandestine relationship. Both offer plausible explanations. Both deny. Yet, step by step, and with cunning theatrical craft, the ugly truth is brought out. Driven to bay at length, *Christiane* defiantly makes the admission. Her disclosure raises a tempest. Heedless of the wise counsel of his philosophical friend, *Huzar*, and listening only to the urging of his whining son, the Count, in furious rage, raises his hand against the shrinking young girl.

At this point the pale *Odette*, who has timorously been hanging in the background, enters the fray. All the pent-up resentment of her unhappy, lonely life is suddenly let loose. Life and love shall not be denied *Christiane*, as in her case. Bitterly she places the responsibility for her sister's fall where it belongs, and defends the young girl's action. It is the cry of a woman cruelly defrauded of her right to love, a plea for wifedom and motherhood and for a fulfillment of human desires.

Compared with this remarkable scene the remainder of the play, tense as it is, becomes almost insignificant. Its fine effect is due no less to its intense human appeal than to the perfect art of its delivery. Night after night it sweeps the audience off its feet and proclaims Miss O'Neil an actress of splendid emotional power.

The upshot of the play is that the old Count retires in virtuous indignation to his Paris club, while *Odette* and *Christiane* continue to occupy the crumbling château which he has made their prison. There is a final hint that *Arnaud* may get his divorce and that all will be well. Thus does Mr. Belasco hoodwink our inherited Puritanism.

I hold no brief for the ethical teaching of "The Lily." A general application of its philosophy might reduce our social system to chaos. But so vividly are the characters drawn, so universal are their emotions, and so craftily is the drama

constructed that, as a human document, is easily triumphs over the disadvantages of its ethical argument. Its analysis of feminine nature is especially minute.

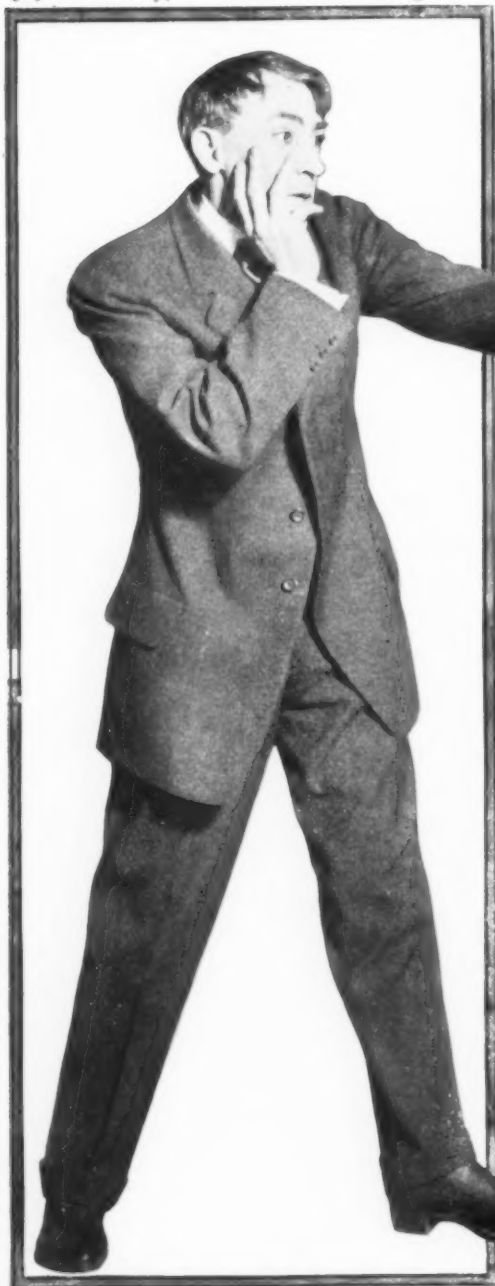
While Miss O'Neil easily overshadows her companion actors, there is scarcely a rôle that is not adequately performed. Especially commendable are Mr. Cartwright as the Count, Miss Julia Dean as *Christiane*, Mr. Bruce McRae as the friend of the family, Mr. Alfred Hickman as *Maximilien*, and Mr. Dodson Mitchell and Miss Florence Nash as the bourgeois, *Plock*, and his daughter.

UNTIL that recent night, when Mr. Clyde Fitch's posthumous play, "The City," had its first performance, the bitter irony of his untimely death was never really understood. He was acknowledged to be the most minute observer of feminine character among our dramatists. Brilliantly did he live up to that reputation. Domestic intrigue and women's wiles were the favorite targets of his clever pen. He touched the life around him with the feather of wit and sometimes pricked it with the dart of satire. But he never assailed it with sledge hammer blows. It was frequently said of him that he could not write a "man's play." With "The City" he disproved the charge once and for all. Yet it was ordained that he should not live to see his vindication.

Had the dramatist been permitted to witness the production of "The City," the wild clamor of the excited audience following the unnerving, blinding climax of his play would have been as music to his ears. In years of theatergoing I have never encountered its parallel. Women screamed in hysterical excitement. One entire box party, gay chatters out for a night's frolic, fled in consternation, unable to stand the pressure of the morbid but powerful scene. Even the men gripped the arms of their chairs in amazement. When the excitement subsided and the people took time to reflect, it became clear that the gentle Fitch, heaping sensation upon sensation, had builded a situation of pathological terrors comparable only with that scene at the end of Ibsen's "Ghosts," when Os-

would grovel at Mrs. Alving's feet, gibbering and crying wildly for the sun.

Although no one can really genuinely enjoy "The City," in the literal meaning of the



Photograph by Hall, New York

Tully Marshall as *George Hannock* in Clyde Fitch's posthumous play "The City"

word, none can fail to admire its wonderful skill. The thesis at its root is that metropolitan life is a crucible in which individual character is developed for good or bad. Be that as it may—I do not agree with the argument, for men and women are not good or evil because of their surroundings, but on account of the inherited proclivities for good or evil which exist within them—this is how Mr.

Fitch attempts to demonstrate it:

George Rand, reared in an up-state town, had

heard the call of the city and had come to New York to carve out his career. He had succeeded in the eyes of the world. His wealth had increased. He was on the eve of being nominated as candidate for Governor.

But the dry bones of a skeleton in the family closet were rattling in his ears. His father, a prosperous but unscrupulous banker, after whom the son patterned his ideals, had been irregular in his domestic life. He had an illegitimate son, and upon his death he had entrusted the secret to his rightful heir, enjoining him to protect the boy, yet to keep the fact of his illegitimate parentage from the family.

This sickly youth, *George Hannock*, a slave to morphine, a scoundrel and a blackmailer, was now *Rand's* secretary. He had made known his intention to profit by the prospective political graft, and *Rand* thereupon had ordered him out of the house. He refused to go, for he knew he had the whip hand over *Rand*.

The whole miserable business culminates that same morning, when *Hannock* secretly married *Rand's* sister, *Cicely*, a girl who had been made headstrong and wayward by the



Photograph by Hall, New York
Tully Marshall as *George Hancock*, Walter Hampden as *George Rand, Jr.*, Miss Mary Nash as *Cecily Rand* and Miss Lucille Watson as *Teresa Rand* at the climax of the third act of "The City," when *Hancock* learns he has married his sister and kills her

new influences of city life. He had not dreamed that he was her half-brother, for he was ignorant of his own parentage.

Then the scene! Vainly *Rand* implored *Hannock* to have the marriage annulled. He refused. Not yet suspecting the truth, *Cicely* urged him to be firm. Every persuasion was tried, but not an inch would either budge. Then came the revelation, followed by *Hannock's* curses, insane paroxysms and frenzied protestations. But the girl did not hear the last word of the disclosure, for a shot rang out and *Hannock* had killed her.

It was at this episode that the first audience lost its self-control. The excitement increased as *Hannock*, now bent on taking his own life, pleaded and fought for the revolver which *Rand* had taken away from him. The latter was once on the point of yielding but he threw the pistol out of the window and left the degenerate to be dealt with by the electric chair.

The remainder of the play—in a contrasting vein of pathos that ranks with Mr. Fitch's best work—is that *Rand* makes reparation by surrendering his questionably acquired fortune and withdrawing from his political candidacy. His consolation is found in the unselfish love of the girl who divines his better nature and is willing to help develop it.

Mr. Fitch left explicit instructions for the staging of the play. Before he set out last summer on the trip to Europe from which he was destined never to return he even selected the actors for the various rôles. How well he took the measure of Mr. Tully Marshall, for whom the character of the degenerate wastrel *Hannock*, was specially written, was proved by that actor's singularly powerful performance. There has been no individual success to equal it on a New York stage since that famous night, many years ago, when the late Richard Mansfield, as *Baron Cheverial* in "A Parisian Romance," won a lasting place among the great stars of our stage.

Mr. Marshall's grewsome delineation exerts a fascination at once repellant and irresistible. Beginning at high tension,

the actor's imagination, physical power and repulsively real delirium pile thrill upon thrill and horror upon horror until the final effect, both pathologically and psychologically true, is little short of tremendous. Not once does he fail to be coherent or to communicate the exact effect desired. As a feat of sheer melodramatic acting, his performance is a fitting companion piece to the perfect example of stagecraft in which it is set.

Otherwise, also, "The City" is one of the season's most conspicuous examples of a well-acted play. With the exception of Mr. Walter Hampden who, as the younger *Rand*, is miscast, the remaining principal characters are held in even balance. They are impersonated by Mr. Edward Emery, Mr. A. H. Stuart, Miss Mary Nash, and Miss Lucille Watson.

MAY Miss Marie Tempest's shadow never grow less! If these words chance to meet the eyes of the buoyant, frolicsome comedienne who has brought her undiminished art and her own company from London to entertain us in "Penelope," I hasten to assure her that they are intended to convey no covert insinuation concerning her increasing waist-line. The time when we paid homage to Miss Tempest as a comic opera queen is long past, but she is not a day less youthful in spirit.

Any of the comedies of Mr. William Somerset Maugham is likely to be a composite of plays gone before, but we cheerfully forgive him his retentive memory if only for the sake of the nimble wit and voluble dialogue with which he dresses them anew. So perhaps it is gratuitous to point out that "Penelope" is only "Divorçons" or "A Woman's Way," or the crux of the Barrie comedy, "What Every Woman Knows," masquerading in new form. At any rate, with Miss Tempest as its clever heroine, it is the most enjoyable of the three or four Maugham comedies which we have seen.

Even a comedy heroine must be in distress. In *Penelope's* case she has wearied her husband by too constant affection. He is *Doctor O'Farrell*, a London physician, and he has chased off after the new inspiration which, he fancies, dances in

the eyes of a shallow, flirtatious wife of an English army officer. Of course, *Penelope* is up in arms at her discovery. She will get a divorce forthwith! But she allows her storm of anger to subside long enough to listen to her father's advice.

He is *Professor Golightly* who has lived long enough for the world to have become his teacher. He counsels *Penelope* to give her wayward husband all he wants of *Mrs.*

Ferguson. For every piece of jewelry *Dr. O'Farrell* gives the dashing and near-grass-widow, *Professor Golightly* advises *Penelope* to invest in a duplicate for herself—with a few expensive gowns and hats thrown in for good measure.

The Doctor has invented a fictitious patient, *Mrs. Mack*, to explain his constant absences from home.

"Dear old *Mrs. Mack*," chirps *Penelope*, "why, she was my mother's dearest friend!"

This little surprise causes the Doctor and *Mrs. Ferguson* to pause and consider.



Three poses of Miss Marie Tempest, who has returned to the American stage in Somerset Maugham's comedy "*Penelope*."

Photographs
by the Dover
Street Studios
London

The flirtation continues for a time. *Penelope's* only solicitude, it appears, is to afford her husband every opportunity to doctor the ailing *Mrs. Mack*. Gradually, however, he grows weary of *Mrs. Ferguson's* charms and his conscience begins to sting because of the deception he fancies he is practicing on his unsus-

pecting wife. All of which, of course, pleases *Penelope* hugely, as she busies her spare moments playing off the two conspirators against each other.

To get out of his predicament, it becomes necessary for *Doc-*

tor O'Farrell to kill off the poor, sick old lady of his invention, and one of the most amusing situations of the play comes when *Penelope* melts to crocodile tears at the news of her mother's dear old friend's death.

At last the Doctor owns up in abject contrition. Here is where Mr. Maugham manages to put a dash of satirical humor of his own into the comedy, for *Doctor O'Farrell* is straightway scandalized at *Penelope's* indifference and indulgently regards himself as by far the more moral of the two. By this time *Mrs. Ferguson* has been allowed to escape in ignominy. When she is well out of the way, *Penelope* confesses her trick and promises to curb in the future her too ardent and too constant affection.

Undoubtedly the character of *Penelope* was cut to fit Miss Tempest's measure. It liberates her volatile personality to perfection, holds her strictly in the path of humor, and shields her from the emotional rocks which, were she al-



Francis Wilson as *Tom Beach* and Baby Davis as *Little Martha* in Mr. Wilson's own farce "The Bachelor's Baby." In the beginning he is a baby hater, but—

lowed to drift upon them, would speedily accomplish failure. Nevertheless there are moments of sentiment in the play which throw the humor into bolder relief.

Miss Tempest's company is only of fair quality. She might have strengthened her cast at last by substituting a better actor than Mr. Philip Desborough in the rôle of *Doctor O'Farrell*. We would suspect him of being an English amateur, if we were not certain that Miss Tempest would never impose so rudely on the good nature of her loyal American admirers.

A CURSORY glance is all that is needed to disclose the fact that "The Bachelor's Baby" is an actor-made farce. Mr. Francis Wilson is its star and his name is also on the program as its author. I would immediately have suspected him of writing it without the testimony of type and printers' ink.

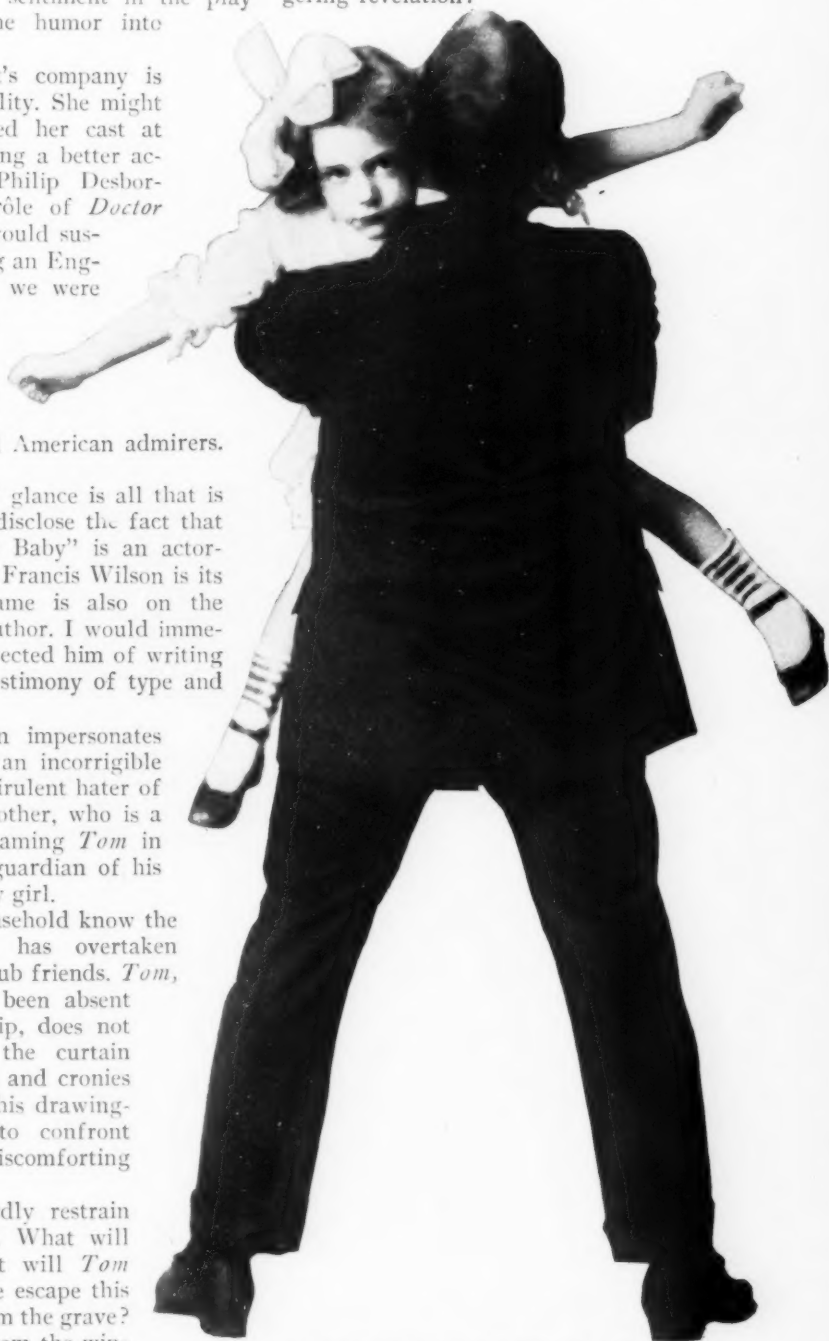
Mr. Wilson impersonates *Tom Beach*, an incorrigible bachelor and a virulent hater of children. His brother, who is a widower, dies, naming *Tom* in his will as the guardian of his five year old baby girl.

All *Tom's* household know the calamity which has overtaken him. So do his club friends. *Tom*, alone, who has been absent on a hunting trip, does not know. When the curtain rises, his friends and cronies are gathered in his drawing-room, waiting to confront him with the discomfiting surprise.

They can hardly restrain their impatience. What will *Tom* say? What will *Tom* do? How will he escape this sacred legacy from the grave?

They watch from the windows for *Tom's* approach.

Presently he is seen coming up the street. Now for the surprise! Now for the staggering revelation!



—before the final curtain falls *Tom* and *Martha* have become great pals

But wait! What star will spoil his first entrance by walking on a stage already monopolized by actors? Here is where Mr. Wilson, author, smooths the way for Mr. Wilson, actor.

"Let's all go into the next room and have a cup of tea," suggests Mrs. Brookfield West.

"Yes, let's!" exclaim the rest, and off they troop, leaving Mr. Wilson in undisputed possession of the scene.

Could anything be more naïve or actor-like? Could any one, except an author-actor, be so humorously transparent in pursuing the main chance?

Mr. Charles Frohman quotes himself as saying that he believes "The Bachelor's Baby" is the best farce seen in New York since he produced "Charley's Aunt." As Mr. Frohman owns "The Bachelor's Baby" he may be a trifle prejudiced in his view. I am quite sure it is not so uniformly amusing as the other farce of long ago with which he compares it. Nevertheless, it is a lively, laughable little piece, and with so captivating an actor as Baby Davis, who plays *Tom Beach's* infant ward, it is bound to succeed.

Tom's hatred of children amounts to an obsession. He curses his ill luck. He doesn't even want to lay eyes on little *Martha*. He positively refuses to be bothered with her in the house.

All the time he is in love with *Winifred West*. She will not marry him because she cannot bring herself to approve of his hatred of children. She has another admirer in *Colonel Calvert*, *Tom's* dead sister-in-law's brother, and by the terms of *Tom's* brother's will the Colonel is to become guardian of little *Martha* in case *Tom* declines the responsibility.

Tom knows about the Colonel's suit, and it sets him to thinking. After first acquaintance with little *Martha*, which, after all, he doesn't find unpleasant, he conceives it to be his duty to relinquish her to the Colonel because he is sure the latter is going to marry *Winifred*, and he knows that *Winifred* adores the child.

Once the baby is gone poor *Tom* grows miserable. At first he cannot understand why. The truth is that, without his suspecting it, little *Martha* has crept

into his heart. To make matters worse, he is sure that he has lost *Winifred*.

But one thing he does not know is, that *Winifred* has no intention of marrying *Colonel Calvert*, who is not fit for any girl to marry. Still in the dark, he finds that his life has suddenly grown lonely and forlorn. *Baby Martha's* toys mock him. While once her sobs and laughter irritated him, the very silence of the house now oppresses him. He struggles in vain against a sudden impulse. Yes, he will bring *Baby Martha* back! And with her, just before the last curtain, he also gets *Winifred*.

The situations of the little play, except the first actor-managed entrance, are ingeniously contrived. The dialogue is not quite so good, for it strains frequently to keep Mr. Wilson in the foreground as the target for laughter. Of course it does, and why not? Didn't Mr. Wilson write it himself and for himself?

Baby Davis, who impersonates *Baby Martha*, is an infantile wonder. Some of her scenes with her reluctant uncle are delicious. Although the dozen others in the cast have a good deal to say, they really have very little to do with the story.

In acting *Tom Beach*, Mr. Wilson has curbed his obstreperousness somewhat. He cannot resist a "comedy" fall now and then, or a "sawdust" grimace. Nevertheless, he puts a good deal of sentiment into the rôle and he contrives to make the whole play an appealing little lesson in unselfishness.

THE Jolly Bachelors" is a worthy successor to "The Midnight Sons." You can tell, almost as soon as the curtain is up, that both musical comedies grew on the same genealogical tree. Unless you are partial to heavy scenery, you may even prefer the newer generation for, from the point of view of its pretty girls, lively songs, ceaseless dancing and beautiful costuming, it even excels the older musical comedy which has contributed so long and so well to the gayeties of Broadway.

I couldn't begin to tell the plot of "The Jolly Bachelors." It escaped me



Photograph by Hall, New York

Jack Norworth as *Hovson Lot*, Miss Nora Bayes as *Miss Vandergould* and Lionel Walsh as *Bunbury Tankerville* in "The Jolly Bachelors." "Is it carbolic acid; chloride of lime, or vitriol?"

altogether on the opening night, but perhaps that was because I was so busy watching the horde of pretty dancing sprites whom Mr. Lew Fields, the producer, has harvested from those Elysian Fields where only beauty grows. The crop is the best that has reached Broadway this year, and it contains scarcely a familiar face. They are good dancers, too, and they have been trained to the minute by Mr. Ned Weyburn, who has shown great ingenuity in arranging their evolutions.

The chorus puts the mere principals to great disadvantage because the latter are better known. That's why they're principals. Among them are Mr. Walter Percival, Mr. Jack Norworth and Mr. Lionel Walsh who impersonate the "bachelors." They are in pursuit of Miss Nora Bayes, a stage heiress of such unbearable wealth that—poor thing!—she is forced to become a lowly cashier in a drug-store in order to throw her admirers off the scent.

In one way or another Miss Elizabeth



Photograph by Hall, New York

Miss Gertrude Vanderbilt, Miss Topsy Siegrist, Al. Leach and Miss Nellie Lynch in Lew Field's new musical comedy, "The Jolly Bachelors," a worthy successor to "The Midnight Sons."



Photograph by
Hall, New York

Miss Josie Sadler as the slave; Miss Stella Mayhew as the colored show-girl in "The Jolly Bachelors"

Brice, Miss Gertrude Vanderbilt, Miss Nellie Lynch, Miss Stella Mayhew, and Miss Topsy Siegrist figure in the speaking parts, even though the librettist, Mr. Glen MacDonough, does not give them many opportunities to talk.

Scarcely a song fails to make a hit. Indeed, they are so uniformly lively and attractive that distinctions are invidious. However, if I were to pick out the ones surest to be most popular, I would name "Tax the Bachelors," by Mr. Billie Taylor; "Kelly of the Emerald Isle," by

Miss Bayes; "What Am I Going To Do To Make You Love Me?" by Miss Bayes, Miss Brice, and the chorus; a College Medley, by Mr. Norworth; "Rosa Rosetta," by Mr. Percival, and "The Red Cross Girls."

In a scenic way, Mr. Fields has set on the stage this time a full-fledged drug store; a big bazaar at a country place; a college campus, with dormitories and all; an airship in flight, and the deck of an ocean-going steamship. The vessel's name is the *Insania*.

PRIZE WINNERS JANUARY RED BOOK MAGAZINE TENQUIZ REPORT OF THE AWARD COMMITTEE

In the January Tenquiz contest of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE the thousands of contest papers received indicate extraordinary pains on the part of the contestants to conform to every rule of the contest and more even than in the earlier contests the answers given to the ten questions show clear reasoning, accurate observation and most excellent logic. While brevity and neatness could not, by virtue of a Postal Department ruling, be

considered in judging the papers the thousands of contestants who sought to give their papers an added interest by way of ingenious and artistic embellishment are hereby congratulated on the skill and taste shown.

The Correct Answers to the ten questions comprising the JANUARY Tenquiz are as follows:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. Old Man McRae | Page 388 |
| 2. Packer's Tar Soap | The Packer Mfg. Co. |
| 3. A string of pearls with a diamond clasp | Page 451 |
| 4. Married men | Page 428 |
| 5. The Home Vacuum Cleaner | R. Armstrong Mfg. Co. |
| 6. Salvaduras | Page 427 |
| 7. Van Camp's Pork and Beans | Van Camp Packing Co. |
| 8. A nightcap and red blanket | Page 437 |
| 9. The Loftis System | Loftis Bros. & Co. |
| 10. The Angle Lamp | Angle Mfg. Co. |

Of the thousands of answer-papers received, eighty-five were correct, and the \$500 cash prize is, therefore, "equally divided among the tying contestants," in the proportion mentioned below, in accordance with a ruling of the United States Post Office Department.

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A check for \$5.88 has therefore been mailed by the publishers of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE to each of the eighty-five foregoing prize winners.

HONORS AND ERRORS

THE HONOR LIST of those who failed by a fraction to be winners would fill so many pages that it would be wholly impossible to arrange them in the order of relative excellence.

A FEW OF THE ERRORS only can be mentioned—just enough to suggest others of like nature.

QUESTION No. 1. Many ingenious attempts were made to supply the missing first name of McRae. He had not yet become "Dad" McRae, and the courtesy title "Mr.", is not used in referring to characters in fiction. Ed. Hatch supplies the logical substitute for a name by designating him as "Old Man," in the paragraph where the answer is found.

QUESTION No. 3. The "object" of Demorest's action was *in* a "box," "package" or "parcel"—but the thing itself was "a string of pearls with a diamond clasp." Nor was it *del* Argo's necklace. He had given it away before it even came into the story.

QUESTION No. 6. It is not more necessary to say "Salvaduras, *Central America*," than "France, Europe,"—but quite a few made the mistake.

QUESTION No. 7. Many answered simply "Pork and Beans," but the advertiser says that his, *only*, will secure the desired result.

QUESTION No. 9. "Diamonds" are among the articles advertised, and "on credit" is one of the *parts* of the plan. But contestants were not asked *what* to buy, or *how*; they were only to *name* the system.

SUPERFLUOUS WORDS. "By the" or "with the," "Principally for," "Operate the," "Lean to serve," "Use," et cetera, spoiled many otherwise good papers, because they were not required by the form of the question. Misspelled words disqualified several answers.

E. O. MCCORMICK,
B. C. HAWKES,
GEORGE H. CURRIER, } Award Committee